W. R. Hartston

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF CHESS OPENINGS

Penguin Handbooks

The Penguin Book of Chess Openings

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Introduction

The opening must surely be the most studied part of the game of chess, yet it remains for most players the least understood. Published theory has grown so vast in recent years that there is an ever-increasing tendency to lose sight of the true principles behind opening play, while struggling to keep pace with the latest trends and developments.

In this book, I have endeavoured to provide a guide to the fundamentals of opening play. Rather than bemuse the reader with countless variations, I have concentrated on explanations of the strategic plans and ideas behind the moves. In this manner, the reader will be able to understand the opening systems he plays, will know on which squares his pieces may be most effectively developed and, above all, will be equipped to plan his game properly when theory runs out.

This book is intended to be both readable and instructive rather than simply a work of reference. Opening theory should not and cannot be just a question of looking up the 'best move' in any given position in large books with the appearance, and approximate validity, of railway timetables. I have, however, covered all the important opening systems and variations which are liable to be encountered in practice. The notes which follow indicate how this book ought to be used and how the reader ought to approach the task of selecting which opening variations to play.

CHOOSING AN OPENING

A player's understanding of any opening system will grow as he gains experience in playing it. For that reason most players prefer to limit their opening repertoires to as few different systems as possible: a single first move, usually 1 P–K4 or 1 P–Q4 to be adopted in all games with the white pieces, and one defence to each of these moves as Black. We all learn, however, the advantages of keeping alternative openings in reserve, either to confound opponents who may have prepared specific variations against our favourite lines, or simply to be able to change clothes when the old openings begin to seem jaded.

We need, therefore, to select an opening repertoire of reliable systems to be studied deeply, and also a set of second-string openings with which one is sufficiently familiar to be able to adopt occasionally. But how to choose what openings to play?

The most important criterion in selecting a suitable opening is that one should feel comfortable playing it. I have avoided making any specific recommendations in this book, because it is a matter of personal style what sort of position a player likes or dislikes. In general it is, in any case, misleading to attempt to classify particular openings as suitable for certain types of player; the different variations within a single opening can accommodate players of widely differing styles. Even the commonly made distinction between 1 P–K4 and 1 P–Q4, that the former leads to a more tactical game and the latter to positional play, can hardly be maintained on close examination. What is true is that 1 P–K4 tends to bring about critical positions more quickly than in games begun with 1 P–Q4. Perhaps for this reason 1 P–Q4 might be recommended to the less impatient player, or one of slower emotions who wants time to settle down to the game before the real fighting has to start.

The best way to choose suitable openings is just to play through master games and discover for yourself which openings

feel right. Then look more closely at them, start playing them in a few games and try them on for size and comfort. Even the task of securing an objectively good position takes lower priority than finding one which one likes and understands, though, of course, one should really aim to combine these objectives.

HOW TO STUDY OPENINGS

Having chosen what openings to play, it becomes necessary to learn more about them. There is an unfortunate tendency among many players to approach the task of learning opening theory with the intention of analysing the game from move 1, committing to memory the best move in every conceivable position. This is, first, impossible, and secondly, no fun. Above all, this method discourages a smooth transition from opening to middle game; when you run out of 'book' moves, acclimatization to real thinking can be difficult. While a certain amount of detailed knowledge is necessary in the openings, one should not overestimate the value of vast mental repositories of theoretical variations.

The best way to learn about the openings is to play one's own games, and to play through published games. When playing quickly through a couple of dozen games in the same opening, one notices the same patterns repeating themselves. These patterns are, in fact, the strategic plans behind the openings; one is learning where the pieces belong. After a time, few of the opening moves in games one sees in familiar openings come as a surprise. They have all been seen before in other games. The task of playing openings well should not be that of formulating plans; all the plans are known already from one's proper study of the opening. The real task is to select and carry out the right strategy, finding the most appropriate moves to send one's pieces where they want to go.

CHAPTER I

The Principles of Opening Play

At the start of any chess game, the two armies face one another, with four clear ranks of open territory between them. The function of the opening is to bring the two sets of forces into contact with one another, to draw up the battle-lines along which the middle game will be fought. There are three major objectives which dictate the play in these early stages of the game:

1. *Harmonious development of the pieces.* The men must be brought into play in such a manner that they cooperate with one another for purposes of both attack and defence.
2. *Control of space, particularly of the centre of the board.* Pieces need squares from which to operate; the greater the amount of territory a player's pieces and pawns control, the more flexibility and freedom of action he will have in placing his men in the middle game.
3. *Formation of a sound pawn structure.* The pawn formation above everything else determines the strategies of both players. The pawns delineate the frontiers of each side's spatial conquests, thereby strongly influencing the players' options in the later stages of the game.

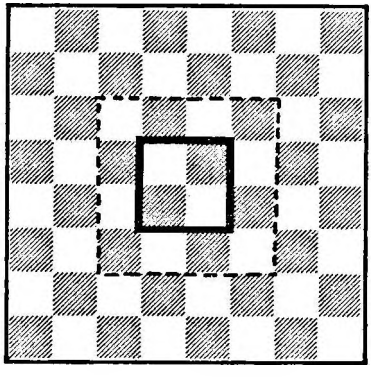
These three principles underlie all good opening play; they dictate which patterns of piece and pawn movements are acceptable as opening systems. In this chapter we shall look at the roles all of the pieces have to play in the fulfilment of these principles. The major portion of this book, however, will be a more detailed examination of all contemporary opening systems, when we shall see how every development scheme does obey

the rules. Every opening system should be viewed as a pawn formation, with the pieces harmoniously deployed about it, the whole set-up controlling and struggling for space. Therein lies the key to understanding the opening.

THE ROLES OF THE DIFFERENT PIECES IN THE OPENING

Here we shall discuss the separate functions of each piece and the pawns in the early stages of the game. First, however, we must think about the squares on which they live, and in particular **the centre.**

One of the most important features of opening play is the struggle for control of the centre of the board. The squares K4, Q4, K5 and Q5 which form the centre, and the additional twelve squares around them, certainly form the principal area of activity in the opening. The fight to control these squares has even been described as the main objective of opening play, though that is perhaps too great a simplification.



The reason for the great importance of the centre in the early stages of the game lies in the necessity to preserve flexibility of movement, to be ready to bring one's pieces wherever they may

be needed. At the start of the game, there is no indication of the direction of the battle; as the sides bring their pieces and pawns into play, their respective strategies gradually become clear. After both players have castled, the rooks come into the game, and the kings have decided on which side of the board they will rest. At this stage the players will usually know whether their attacking chances lie on the K-side or the Q-side of the board. When the necessity is perceived to switch forces from one wing to the other, control of at least some of the central squares is essential in order to be able to carry out the required manoeuvres. A knight or a bishop in the centre of the board radiates its influence to all four corners. From a central square a piece can join the attack or retreat for defence as the occasion demands. Later in the game the importance of the centre diminishes, the main centres of action becoming localized to different regions of the board. Until very clear and immutable plans of campaign are formed, however, the centre remains the most important area of all.

The Queen

Taking the strongest piece first, the queen's role in opening play is one of the most difficult to comprehend properly. The attractions of bringing out the queen early in the game are apparent to every beginner. She is such a strong piece that she can threaten the enemy from the start of play. Soon we all learn that the queen is also especially vulnerable. When attacked by any lesser piece, she has to run away. Bringing the queen out early can thus result in loss of time. Usually, therefore, early queen sorties are inadvisable, since the queen can in most cases be attacked by developing moves of the opponent. Exceptions occur when the queen can occupy an aggressive post without fear of attack by enemy pieces. Thus, for example, after the moves 1 P–K4 P–K4, the continuation 2 P–Q4 P × P 3 Q × P loses time for White after the reply 3 . . .

N–QB3, bringing a piece into play and forcing the queen to move again. On the other hand, the similar continuation 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N × N 5 Q × N is considerably better for White; the only means Black has of attacking the centrally posted queen do nothing to further his own development: 5 . . . P–QB4 does not bring any piece into the game and in fact creates a serious weakness in the pawn structure, while 5 . . . N–K2 followed by 6 . . . N–QB3 would spend two moves developing a piece which ought to find a good square on KB3 in one. Similarly, after 1 P–K4 P–K4 the move 2 Q–R5 is not good; after taking time to defend his KP with 2 . . . N–QB3 Black is ready to gain time with a later . . . N–B3 or . . . P–KN3 driving the queen away, and the latter move will be a useful gain of time if played in conjunction with development of the bishop on KN2. In contrast we should look at the opening of the game Winter–Alekhine, Nottingham, 1936, which started 1 P–Q4 P–K3 2 P–K4 P–Q4 3 P × P P × P 4 B–Q3 N–QB3 5 N–K2 B–Q3 6 P–QB3 Q–R5! The same queen move as in the earlier example, but the difference here is that the white knight has moved from KN1 and can no longer threaten the queen from KB3. Alekhine's queen move dissuades White from castling (7 O–O? Q × RP mate!) while also preparing to develop his remaining bishop and castle long himself. We should also note that the move 7 P–KN3 is met by 7 . . . Q–R4 when White has only succeeded in weakening the white squares of his K-side formation. Now it should be clear that there are both good and bad queen moves in the opening; the queen is a powerful piece, but must be used with care. Let us finally look at a complete game in which Black was severely punished for his faulty play with the queen.

WHITE: SPASSKY BLACK: LARSEN
(Montreal, 1979)

1 P–K4 P–Q4 2 P × P Q × P

Black plays a dubious opening which allows his queen to be chased early in the game; Larsen is a player whose liking for

taking risks has taken him to the very highest levels. In this game it does not pay dividends.

3 N–QB3 Q–QR4

The queen looks safe here, but as we shall see even at the edge she can be vulnerable.

4 P–Q4 N–KB3 5 **N–B3 B–B4** 6 **B–Q2**

The bishop looks rather passively placed here, but it is on the same diagonal as the black queen and that is important in what follows.

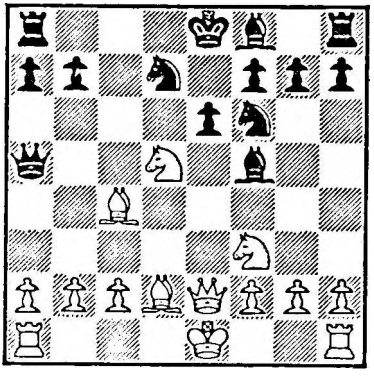
6 . . . QN–Q2 7 B–QB4 P–B3

Black makes provisions against the threatened 8 N–Q5 by giving the queen a retreat.

8 Q–K2!

White makes full use of the unfortunate position of the enemy queen. Now 8 . . . B × P? loses to 9 N–QN5 Q–Q1 (or 9 . . . Q–N3 10 N–Q6 ch K–Q1 11 N × BP ch winning the rook in the corner) 10 N–Q6 mate!

8 . . . P–K3 9 **P–Q5! BP × P** 10 **N × P**



The central breakthrough was only possible because of this discovered attack on the queen. Everything has gone wrong for Black; the position has been opened and White's lead in

development gives him the basis for an enduring attack; a typical consequence of premature queen development.

10 . . . **Q–B4** 11 **P–QN4 Q–B1** 12 **N** × **N ch P** × **N** 13 **N–Q4 B–N3** 14 **P–KR4 P–KR4** 15 **P–B4 B–K2** 16 **R–R3**

An unusual but effective way to develop the rook. White is ready to put this piece on the KN-file or QB-file according to where the black king runs.

16 . . . **Q–B2** 17 **O–O–O Q–N3**

The sixth queen move, but still she finds herself molested by white pieces.

18 **B–K1! O–O–O** 19 **N–N5!**

There is no satisfactory answer to the threat of 20 B–B2. For example 19 . . . P–R3 20 B–B2 Q–B3 loses the queen to 21 N–R7 ch. The rest of the game is just a continuation of Black's disaster story.

19 . . . **N–N1** 20 **R** × **R ch K** × **R** 21 **B–B2 Q–B3** 22 **B** × **RP N–Q2** 23 **P–R3 Q–K5** 24 **B–K3 B–KB4** 25 **R–N3 Q–B3** 26 **N–Q4 Q–R5** 27 **N** × **B Q** × **RP ch** 28 **K–Q1 Q–R8 ch** 29 **B–B1 B** × **P**

Total desperation, since 29 . . . P × N 30 R–Q3 leaves White with the killing threat of 31 B–N5.

30 **B–N5 N–N3** 31 **Q–K4 Q–R4** 32 **Q** × **NP** and **Black resigned.**

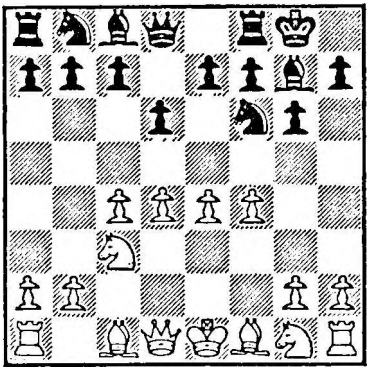
32 . . . P × N 33 R–Q3 ch or 32 . . . Q × B 33 R–Q3 ch K–K1 34 Q–N8 ch force mate in a move or two.

Of course, that was an exaggerated example of the possible consequences of premature queen development, but it serves the purpose of showing how careful even great players must be when deciding to bring the queen out early.

The Pawns

The most difficult moves in chess are the pawn moves; they cannot be moved back, so we must be very careful where we put them. In the opening, pawn play is all-important. We have

already stressed the importance of the centre in opening play. About a century ago, when opening theory first came to be studied scientifically, the task of controlling the centre was left to the pawns. In the same way that the queen is a bad piece to use for control of squares, the pawns are ideal for the job. They are best able to stand their ground when attacked by other, larger pieces. All that is necessary is that they be sufficiently defended. Thus, the old-style openings involve attempts to dominate the centre by pawns. The King's Gambit, for example, starting 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 P–KB4 P × P 3 N–KB3 sees White even offering a pawn in order to establish an 'ideal' pawn centre by playing P–Q4 next move. The main intention behind the older openings was the formation of this centrally dominating structure of pawns at K4 and Q4. Later there came the important historical development when it was realized that the centre could also be controlled by pieces, but here too there must always be the intention of later attacking the centre with the pawns which have been held back. Take, for example, the four pawns' attack in the King's Indian Defence; this is perhaps the greatest contrast between the two schools of pawn play. The opening moves are 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 B–N2 4 P–K4 P–Q3 5 P–B4 O–O.

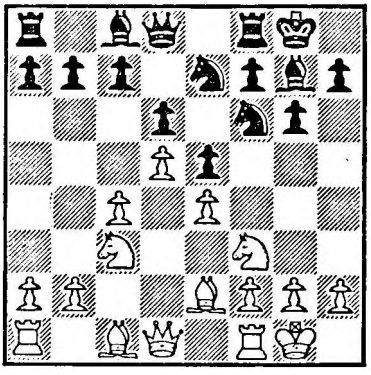


White dominates the centre with his pawns, while Black has played with restraint, ready now to strike back with . . . P–QB4

or . . . P–K4, regaining some of the space conceded in the interests of quick piece development. White hopes that the onrush of his pawns will quickly lead to great space gains and a decisive attack; Black relies on his ability to strike back and eventually take advantage of the squares left unprotected by the bold white pawns. Both strategies of pawn play are perfectly valid but, at their extreme levels, both demand very accurate play to justify them. Normally a nice balance is adopted between pawn and piece moves in the opening; the pieces are brought out quickly into play, the pawns are moved forward cautiously and systematically to control space.

What then is a good pawn structure, and what formations should be avoided? To attempt a general answer to this question would not be helpful, too much depends on the relationships existing between the pawns themselves and the pieces in the position. In general one must be wary of advancing pawns in such a manner as to leave 'holes' in the formation – squares which can no longer be defended by a pawn. Such holes may only be tolerated when the weak squares are adequately protected by pieces, and where the weakness is compensated by free piece play. Philidor spoke of the pawn's 'lust to expand'; the pawns are a mobile force wanting to advance up the board, conquering the space over which they pass. For this reason it is desirable to aim to have two pawns next to each other on the same rank at the head of the pawn formation. Such pawns control all four squares in front of them, and should either advance it will be protected by the other. Thus the two pawns at the head of the formation satisfy our demands for both spatial control and flexibility. The classic centre of pawns at K4 and Q4 is an example of such a formation, but just as common are pawns at K4 and KB4 or Q4 and QB4. Much of the strategy of pawn play is based on this desire to establish two pawns together at the head of the formation, whether it be on the fourth or fifth rank. Let us see how these ideas apply in two typical opening sequences. First, the position after the moves 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 B–N2

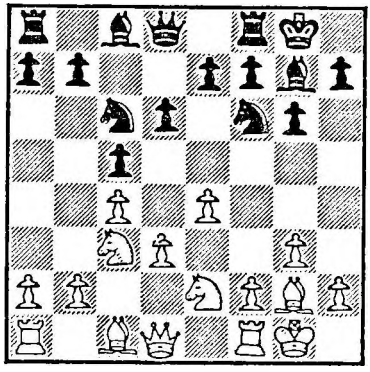
4 P–K4 P–Q3 5 B–K2 O–O 6 N–B3 P–K4 7 O–O N–B3 8 P–Q5 N–K2:



By allowing his QP to be tempted on to the fifth rank White has surrendered some flexibility of pawn structure in favour of his claims to more space. Now that the pawns in the centre are locked together, the strategic plans become clear. Both sides must strive for those pawn moves which enable another pawn to come alongside the ones leading the formation: White wants to advance his pawn to QB5, Black must play for . . . P–KB4. A typical continuation from the position in the diagram is 9 N–K1 N–Q2 10 N–Q3 P–KB4 11 B–Q2 N–KB3 12 P–B3 P–B5 13 P–B5 P–KN4. Note how the black knight moved out of the way to free the path for the KBP to advance; White's knight in the meantime was supporting the advance of his own QBP. Black's tenth move formed his dual pawn head, which he surrendered in the interests of space gaining by playing 12 . . . P–B5. His last move in the sequence continues the theme by announcing his intention to regain the ideal formation with an eventual . . . P–N5. The pieces just seem to be obeying the orders of the pawns in such positions and that is fairly typical, especially of positions with blocked centres.

Our second example is from the English Opening: 1 P–QB4 P–QB4 2 N–QB3 P–KN3 3 P–KN3 B–N2 4 B–N2

N–QB3 5 P–K4 N–B3 6 KN–K2 O–O 7 O–O P–Q3 8 P–Q3:



This position is strategically extremely complex in view of the pawn formation which White has adopted. He has willingly accepted a hole at Q4 in order to have two separate headpoints to his structure, the pawns at K4 and QB4. Now, from the point of view of the pawn formation, there are three desirable pawn moves for White: P–QN4 and P–KB4, forming the united two-pawn fronts on the K-side and Q-side, and P–Q4 ridding himself of the backward pawn. Black's strategy is partly based on White's gift of the central black square at . . . Q5, which he must attempt to dominate, while also preparing his own thematic advance of . . . P–QN4. A typical sequence from the diagram is 8 . . . N–K1 9 P–KR3 N–B2 10 P–KN4 B–Q2 11 P–B4 R–N1 12 P–B5 P–QN4. Note again how the black knight retreats in order to open the bishop's diagonal and keep a firm grip on Q5; the second move of the knight, to QB2, supports the advance of the QNP. Meanwhile, White has continued with his space-gaining plans on the K-side, first forming a big front of three pawns on the fourth rank, then advancing to create more room for his pieces. Compared with the previous example, the centre was relatively uncluttered with pawns, but still their structure has a profound influence

on the play. Expanding the pawn structure is always a fundamental part of middle-game strategy, and the knowledge of which pawn moves are desirable plays a strong role in deciding where the pieces must be placed.

The Bishops

The bishop is an extremely versatile piece in opening play with an important role to play, whatever the style of the game. Consider the following three opening sequences, with special attention on the function of the white king's bishop:

A: 1 P–KN3 P–K4 2 B–N2 N–QB3 3 P–QB4 P–B4 4 P–Q3 N–B3 5 N–QB3 P–Q3 6 R–N1 P–KN3 7 P–QN4 B–N2 8 P–N5.

B: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–QB3 N–QB3 3 P–KN3 P–KN3 4 B–N2 B–N2 5 KN–K2 N–B3 6 O–O P–Q3 7 P–Q3 O–O 8 P–B4.

C: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O P–QN4 6 B–N3 P–Q3 7 P–B3 N–QR4 8 B–B2.

In the first example, the bishop on KN2 is the star of the show. White's strategy is based on its power on the long white diagonal and everything is done to increase that power. The pawns on QB4 and Q3 increase the hold on the central white squares and White's advance of his QNP takes his control of the diagonal down to QB6. Later we may even expect White to attempt to advance his QRP to the fifth rank (next to the leading pawn of the formation as usual) and then perhaps further soften up the diagonal for the bishop with P–QR6. This is an example of the first type of fianchetto: the bishop is placed on N2 in order to control the long diagonal.

The second example sees the bishop on the same square, but in a completely new guise. Here White even blocks the diagonal firmly with his KP before placing the bishop behind it. The

point here is best understood by comparing the different functions in the two examples of the moves P–KN3 and B–N2. In the first example, the point was almost entirely in the move B–N2. The bishop was to be placed on the long diagonal. In the second example, the move P–KN3 had the highest importance as a pawn move. White wants his two pawns next to each other on K4 and KB4. Since the move P–KB4 is always liable to result in the capture of this pawn by the black KP, White wants a pawn on KN3 to recapture. Thus the pawn structure demands a pawn on KN3. This is the second type of fianchetto: P–N3 is an important pawn move, the bishop must then be placed at N2 in order to protect the vulnerable squares at B3 and R3 weakened by the pawn move.

The third example sees the bishop in ■ more tactical role, where its main job is to prevent Black from freeing his position, while White gets on with his own strategic preparations. The theme of the White play here is to prepare P–QB3 and P–Q4, while denying Black the opportunity of . . . P–Q4 himself. First the bishop goes to N5 with a sort of half pin on the black knight. If the black QP moves, then the knight will be pinned to the king. After attack by the QRP, the bishop retreats, but stays on the pinning diagonal. (We shall see when we come to discuss the Ruy Lopez opening that White gains nothing by capturing the knight.) The next stop on the bishop's journey is QN3. White seems to have lost time, but the moves of the black Q-side pawns do not have much good effect and may even be considered as creating weaknesses. The little trip has given White enough time to castle, so the attempt to free Black's game with 6 . . . P–Q4 would rebound badly after 7 P × P N × P 8 R–K1 with too much pressure on the black KP. Therefore Black reconciles himself to a single move of the QP. White's 7 P–B3 is based on the tactical point that 7 . . . N × P? loses material to 8 B–Q5! a nice piece of bishop trickery. Finally after 7 . . . N–QR4 8 B–B2 the bishop comes to rest, guarding the KP and having justified its whole journey by the fact that White is now ready to form his ideal pawn centre with

P–Q4. Thanks to the bishop's contribution to the tactics of the position, White's strategy has been carried out successfully.

In all these examples, we saw how closely the bishop's role is dependent on the pawn structure. This is even more true in positions where one or both sides adopt formations in which most of the pawns are on squares of a single colour. In the Dutch Stonewall defence, for example, after the moves 1 P–Q4 P–KB4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 P–KN3 P–K3 4 B–N2 B–K2 5 O–O O–O 6 P–B4 P–Q4 7 QN–Q2 P–B3, Black's bishop on QB1 is hampered by the pawns. Two of the most common plans in the position involve its manoeuvre to better pastures, either by means of the plan B–Q2, B–K1 and B–KR4, finally exchanging the piece for White's knight, or taking a more generous view of the bishop's potential by playing . . . P–QN3 and B–R3. Note, incidentally, that the pedantic view, describing White's bishop on KN2 as a 'good' bishop and Black's at QB1 as 'bad', is rather difficult to sustain. The solid black centre hampers the white bishop almost as totally as it prevents its own from operating properly. Only if White can effect the moves P–B3 and P–K4 might he make his bishop more effective than its enemy counterpart. The principal defect of Black's position is not so much the badness of his bishop as the lack of control over the black squares. That is almost always the main worry about monochromatic pawn structures. One plan we often see in such a stonewall position is for White to try to exchange the black-squared bishops, thus further weakening Black's control over those squares.

One final example to illustrate the cooperation necessary between bishops and pawns in the opening is the start of the final game of the Larsen–Portisch match, 1968: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–QB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 N–B3 4 P–Q3 N–QR4 5 KN–K2 N × B 6 P × N B–K2 7 O–O P–Q3 8 P–QN3 O–O 9 N–N3 P–B3 10 B–N2 Q–R4 11 Q–K1 Q–B2 12 P–QR4 B–K3 13 R–Q1 P–QR3 14 Q–K2 B–N5 15 P–B3 B–Q2. Having permitted the exchange of his white-squared bishop, Larsen maximizes his control of the position by putting his pawns on

white squares so that they will not hinder the other bishop and will more than compensate for its missing colleague by controlling the light squares. With the queen and knights also keeping an eye on the same-coloured squares, White has good overall control of the board. This is a good example of the general rule: when one bishop is exchanged, the pawns belong on squares of the colour that bishop controlled.

The Knights

Very tricky pieces, knights. Their short-range limitations make them quite different from other pieces. All the other men need open lines on which to function freely, but the knight is happy anywhere. In many openings the knight introduces the first tactical elements, attacking enemy pawns or defending its own. After 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 the knight already threatens to take a pawn; Black's 2 . . . N–QB3 defends it. The knights in such positions are mainly responsible for the forcing play. Their role is in the hand-to-hand fighting at close quarters, the cut and thrust of attack and defence. In slower, more positional openings, we have already seen several examples of knights developed early to B3 for their excellent value in central control, later having to move out of the way to allow a BP to advance. Although, ideally, knights belong behind pawns, in order to avoid impeding their advance, far more often than not it pays to develop the knights early. Their tactical value in controlling the play counts for more than such idealistic considerations. Just one example should serve to illustrate some of the difficulties of knight play. After the moves 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–QB3 N–QB3 3 P–KN3 P–KN3 4 B–N2 B–N2 5 P–Q3 P–Q3 6 P–B4 P–K4 White must decide what to do with his undeveloped knight. Let us consider the effects of each of the three knight moves:

A: 7 N–B3 increases White's influence over his Q4 and K5 squares, but not sufficiently so for Black's overall control of them to be really challenged; it prepares to castle and envisages

some possibilities of a K-side attack with N–KR4 and P–KB5. On the minus side the move lessens White's control of Q5 by blocking the diagonal of the bishop. Thus Black is likely to be able to free his position by means of . . . KN–K2 followed by P × P and P–Q4. Black's main defect is the hole at his Q4, so perhaps White should keep his grip on that square.

B : 7 KN–K2 also prepares to castle while leaving both the long white diagonal and the KB–file uncluttered as well. Thus White is ready to play P–B5 after castling, while also maintaining his control of Q5. On the minus side, the knight itself has little future on K2. Only if the other knight is allowed to occupy Q5 can it then move to QB3 in support. After . . . KN–K2, however, the move N–Q5 becomes less attractive, since it would only result in a white pawn on Q5 rather than a strong piece on that square.

C : 7 N–R3 looks rather offside, but does share with 7 KN–K2 the advantage of not getting in the way of other pieces. It also envisages an attack with O–O, P–B5 and perhaps N–N5. On the other hand, if that attack is prevented, the knight might indeed be rather out of play on the wing.

All of the knight moves are thus fully in keeping with certain aspects of the position, but have drawbacks with regard to other salient features.

This was, of course, a particularly awkward example. In general, a knight will only have one naturally good square. The black knight at KN1 in the same position, for example, we know will develop to K2. From that square it keeps an eye on Q4 (where a white knight would like to sit) and on KB4 (where the white pawn would like to advance) while also leaving the KBP free to move to B4 when it wants. When faced with such problems of knight development as White has in this position, one must just put the knight where it feels best, after looking at a few possible variations, and then make the best of it.

The Rooks and the King

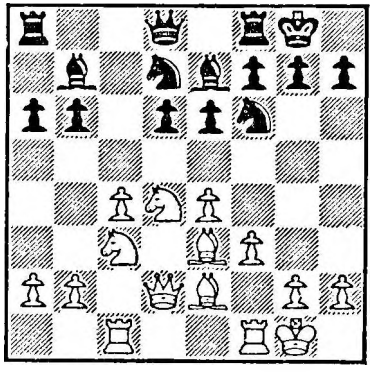
At first it might seem curious to take these pieces together, but remember that we often move them together in the opening – when castling. So often considered as just a king move, castling is just as important as a rook move. It places the king on one side of the board, while connecting the rooks on the other side. In the position of the previous example, we considered some possibilities White had of castling and advancing his KBP another square, supported by the rook on the KB-file. No consideration there was given to castling as a *king* move; it was just to bring the rook quickly to the desired file, while incidentally taking the king out of the centre.

From the king's point of view, early castling is indeed usually desirable. Any opening of the position can react badly against a king stuck in the middle of the board, so best tuck it away somewhere safe. As soon as the pawn structure begins to take shape, it becomes clear on which side of the board the king ought to reside. Sometimes one wing is ruled out because the opponent has too many forces there and would develop too strong an attack. Equally, a king can be a liability on the same wing as one's own attack. If we are trying to gain space by a pawn advance on one wing, perhaps the king is better off on the other side behind the unmoved pawns. As we saw in the position of the diagram on page 21 White is content to put his king on the very wing where Black is advancing in order to keep freedom of action for himself on the other side of the board. Once again it is the pawn formation which decides where the king is best placed. Remember, though, that we must consider the pawn formation not only as it stands, but also as it is likely to develop. Sometimes castling on the 'wrong' side can presage a vigorous pawn advance on the other wing. In the Queen's Gambit, for example, after the moves 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 4 B–N5 B–K2 5 P–K3 O–O 6 N–B3 QN–Q2 7 Q–B2 P–B4 8 O–O–O White signals his intention to launch a pawn storm on the

K-side. 8 . . . P–KR3 may be met by 9 P–KR4! Note how castling in this case is very much a rook move. By choosing to castle long White maintains his rook on the KR-file, thus enabling P–KR4 to be played, while also bringing a rook to the Q-file, *vis-à-vis* the black queen, thereby putting pressure on the black centre. The price is a slightly unstable king position, but the black pieces are far away and White hopes to keep the initiative long enough to prevent their becoming a nuisance. The risk, however, is certainly there, and usually one is better advised not to castle behind such advanced pawns.

On their own the rooks pose different problems in the opening. Their main role is twofold: the occupation of open files; and the support of pawn advances, later utilizing the space gained by those advances. When there are open files, or clearly desirable pawn advances to be prepared, good rook moves suggest themselves easily. For example, after 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–QB3 3 N–KB3 N–B3 4 P × P P × P 5 N–B3 N–B3 6 B–B4 P–K3, it is natural for both sides to castle K-side as quickly as possible, and for all rooks to migrate towards the QB-file as quickly as possible. That is the only open file, and the only one likely to be open for some time. Or after 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 4 P × P P × P 5 B–N5 B–K2 6 P–K3 O–O 7 Q–B2 P–B3 8 B–Q3 QN–Q2 9 N–B3 R–K1 10 O–O N–B1 the move 11 QR–N1 is fully in keeping with the position. White wants to gain space with P–QN4 and P–N5, so the rook supports this advance, while also making sure it is ready if and when the QN-file is opened as a result of the intended action. Equally, the opening sequence 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P P–K3 5 N–QB3 P–Q3 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 B–QB4 B–K2 8 Q–K2 O–O 9 O–O–O Q–B2 may be followed by 10 KR–N1, preparing P–KN4 (unplayable immediately because of 10 . . . N–K4 winning a pawn). White's plan is a K-side attack with pawns and pieces, and the rook move facilitates this. In both these cases the rook moves to a square from where it has no immediate scope, but where room will naturally grow around

it. In such positions, where the likely future developments are predictable, good rook placement is not so difficult. Problems arise when the future is less willing to reveal itself. Consider the position after 1 P–QB4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P P–QN3 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 P–B3 P–K3 7 P–K4 P–Q3 8 B–K2 P–QR3 9 B–K3 B–K2 10 O–O O–O 11 R–B1 QN–Q2 12 Q–Q2. Where should Black put his rooks?

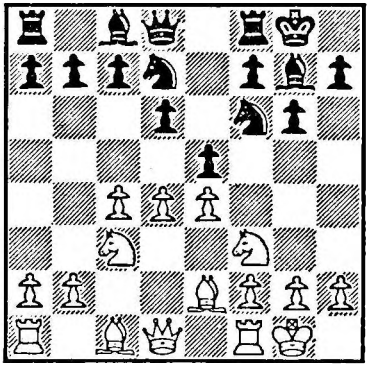


At the moment White has an advantage in space, but the black position is very solid; the fight is for White's fifth rank, the no-man's-land between the two armies. Black would like to break White's grip on the position with . . . P–Q4 or . . . P–QN4; the first of these, however, is liable to open the position to White's advantage, while the second would need a great deal of preparation. White himself, on the other hand, could have difficulties in developing his initiative. His pieces must keep a permanent watch on the two pawn advances which would free Black's game, and any outright aggression involving pawn advances could easily create too many weaknesses in the white camp. There is a case then for putting a black rook on QN1, waiting for an opportunity to threaten P–QN4, and tying down white pieces seeking to prevent that advance. There is also a good case, however, for putting a rook on QB1, discouraging White from playing P–QN4 in view of the resulting vulnera-

bility of the QBP, while also improving the circumstances for . . . P–Q4; if the QB-file is to be opened, it might be wise to have a rook already on it. While we are thinking about . . . P–Q4, might it not be good to have a rook on Q1 to facilitate that advance? And what about a rook on K1 to take advantage of the open K-file after a general central pawn exchange? There is another point in favour of K1, in that White might decide to become aggressive by playing P–B4 (after defending his KP sufficiently to make this possible); with a rook on K1 Black could meet this with . . . P–K4, opening the way for his rook to exert pressure down the K-file. But what if White decides to attack with P–KN4 and P–N5? Might we not need K1 for the knight to retreat? Perhaps the rook should stay on KB1 to meet the attack when it comes.

Such problems are quite typical when handling rooks in unpredictable positions. All you can do is keep as flexible as possible, playing consistently with your own plans while remaining ready to deal with your opponent's as soon as he reveals his hand. One word of warning should be added, however, concerning the psychology of rook moves. Quite frequently you may find yourself in a position where the opponent has two possible plans (for example, he could have the choice between closing the centre by a pawn advance, or leaving it open by maintaining the pawn on its present square). You decide that in one case your rook belongs on a particular square, in the other case on a different square. He refuses to commit himself to either of the plans, so eventually you decide to move the rook, to one of the two squares. Immediately he replies by settling for the plan which leaves the rook misplaced. In such a case the common reaction is one of self-criticism for putting the rook on a bad square. But perhaps it was not so bad; perhaps really congratulations are in order for having persuaded the opponent to commit himself by your wily rook move. A good example of this in the King's Indian Defence. In the diagram position (page 32) White can always change the character of the position with P–Q5, but it pays him to wait a

while. After P–Q5, Black moves his knight from KB3 and prepares the natural . . . P–KB4 advance. Therefore White waits for Black to play . . . R–K1. Only then does he advance the QP, leaving the black rook on the wrong square (it is ideally placed on KB1 to support the advance of the KBP).



Black's R–K1 may therefore be viewed either as a bad move, misplacing the rook, or as a good move, inducing White to reveal his intentions. The secret for both players in such a position is flexibility. Black should delay . . . R–K1 until White has played some moves equally out of keeping with the advance of his QP. As so often in difficult openings, everything is a question of precise timing.

GAMBITS

Finally, a few words on sacrifices in the opening, or 'gambits' as they are called. Some opening systems, particularly the older ones, involve the offer of a pawn or two very early in the game in order to gain time or space, usually in the hope of a quickly decisive attack. Nowadays, with a general level of defensive play much higher than in former times, the gambiteer has a harder task than in the past. Nevertheless, there remain

some sophisticated gambit systems (the Benko Gambit is a good example) still popular even at high levels of play.

Whether to play gambits is largely a matter of personal taste. If, like the present author, you are fundamentally a materialist who does not mind defending for the sake of an extra pawn, you accept gambits when they are played against you, then hang grimly on to win the end game. More cavalier spirits prefer to be the side offering the sacrifice, relying on their natural attacking feel to punish the greed of their opponents. All is a matter of temperament. Whether a particular position offers compensation for a sacrificed pawn depends as much on who is playing it as on more objective criteria. By all means play opening gambits, if you like the feel of the positions which arise, but never underestimate the value of a single pawn!

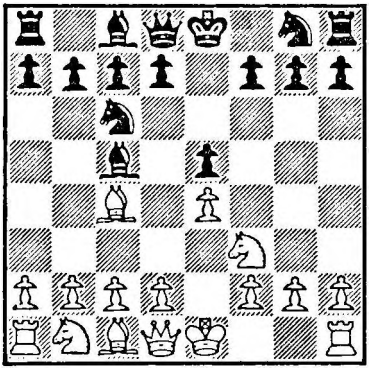
CHAPTER 2

Open Games I: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4

The moves 1 P–K4 P–K4 are the classical way to open a chess game. These advances of the king's pawns free the way for quick development of queen and bishop. In earlier times this was the signal for quick and brilliant attacks; while even now these are not uncommon, they are usually preceded by more careful strategic preparation than was formerly the case. In order better to understand the principles which have evolved in the treatment of open games, let us look at the various different possibilities for both sides in approximately chronological order of popularity, starting with the old Giuoco Piano, proceeding via the King's Gambit and other romantic openings of the last century to end with the sophistication of the modern Ruy Lopez.

THE GIUOCO PIANO: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 B–B4

First mentioned in the Göttingen manuscript of 1490 and analysed by Damiano in 1512, the Giuoco Piano ('quiet game') can lead to quite violent play. White combines the two basic themes of open games: a quick attack against Black's most vulnerable point at KB2, and the attempt to dominate the centre with P–QB3 and P–Q4. Note that the black bishop on QB4, while adding to Black's influence over his Q5 square, also encourages White's plan of forcing the P–Q4 advance, since if successfully executed this move will gain time by attacking the bishop. The main line of play is very sharp but, as we shall see,



Black can defend successfully. Five centuries of analysis have taken most of the bite from this opening, but there are still some relatively unexplored avenues, and still plenty of traps for the unwary. Let us see how play develops:

4 P–B3

White prepares to set up his big centre with P–Q4. The more cautious alternative is 4 P–Q3) the Giuoco Pianissimo) when there can follow 4 . . . N–B3 5 N–B3 (or 5 P–B3 P–Q3 6 P–QN4 B–N3 7 P–QR4 P–QR3 with equal chances) P–Q3 6 B–KN5 P–KR3 7 B × N Q × B 8 N–Q5 Q–Q1 9 P–B3 P–R3 and Black stands well; his bishop is provided with a retreat at QR2 after White's P–Q4, so the bishop pair is maintained ▪ a useful asset for the middle game.

4 . . . N–B3!

Black correctly develops his men and prepares . . . P–Q4 himself, the most principled strategy against White's straightforward play.

5 P–Q4 P × P 6 P × P B–N5 ch!

In this sharp position, the fight for the initiative is important; Black has no time for the passive retreat 6 . . . B–N3, when 7 P–Q5 N–K2 8 P–K5! N–N5 9 P–Q6 N × BP 10 Q–N3! gives a winning attack after 10 . . . N × R 11 B × P ch K–B1

12 B–N5. This variation is typical of the type of disaster which can overcome a careless Black player in this opening.

7 N–B3!?

7 B–Q2 B × B ch 8 QN × B P–Q4! 9 P × P KN × P 10 Q–N3 QN–K2 11 O–O O–O gives Black easy equality, so White must try this knight move if he is to obtain anything from the opening. Some of the variations give him spectacular attacking possibilities but, as we shall see, with correct defence everything fizzles out.

7 . . . N × KP!

The challenge must be accepted. Instead 7 . . . P–Q4 8 P × P KN × P 9 O–O! is dangerous for Black in view of his incomplete development and the openness of the position. One possibility is 9 . . . N × N 10 P × N B × P? (greedy, but 10 . . . B–K2 also leaves White with a healthy initiative) 11 Q–N3! B × R 12 B × P ch K–B1 13 B–R3 ch N–K2 14 B–R5 P–KN3 15 N–N5 Q–K1 16 R–K1 and the White attack is devastating.

8 O–O!

Quick development must be the key to White's play; now the open K-file is potentially highly dangerous for Black.

8 . . . ♗ × N

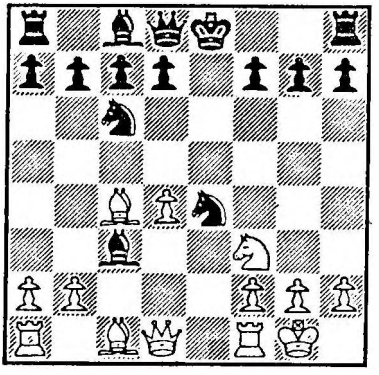
Some of the best ideas in this opening are seen after the erroneous 8 . . . N × N? 9 P × N B × P? (better to bale out with 9 . . . P–Q4! 10 P × B P × B 11 R–K1 ch N–K2 though White has a strong initiative here too). Now White has the choice between two tempting continuations:

(a) 10 Q–N3 hopes for 10 . . . B × R 11 B × P ch K–B1 12 B–KN5 N–K2 13 N–K5! B × P 14 B–N6 P–Q4 15 Q–B3 ch B–B4 16 B × B B × N 17 B–K6 ch B–B3 18 B × B and wins. Black can, however, defend with 10 . . . P–Q4! 11 B × P O–O.

(b) 10 B–R3! is even stronger, ensuring that the black king cannot run away; for example 10 . . . P–Q3 11 R–B1 B–R4

12 Q–R4! P–QR3 (What else to do against the threat of 13 P–Q5? At least that can now be met by 13 . . . P–QN4) 13 B–Q5 B–N3 14 R × N! B–Q2 15 R–K1 ch K–B1 16 R × QP! and White wins; or 10 . . . P–Q4 11 B–N5 B × R 12 R–K1 ch B–K3 13 Q–R4! and the threats of 14 B × N ch or 14 N–K5 give a winning attack; or finally 10 . . . N–K2 11 Q–N3 P–Q4 12 Q × BP × B 13 KR–K1 B–K3 14 B × N K × B 15 N–N5 and again Black is subjected to a withering attack.

All these lines exemplify the type of attack White aims for in this opening and for that reason I have gone into some detail. At least it shows what the Black player is striving to avoid.



After 8 . . . B × N Black seems, at first glance, to have solved his problems: 9 P × B P–Q4 gives him an immediately satisfactory game. White, however, still has attacking resources:

9 P–Q5!

This is known as the Möller attack, after the Danish theoretician who discovered the move late in the last century. White delays regaining the piece in order to preserve his initiative.

9 . . . B–B3

The correct defence; 9 . . . N–K4 10 P × B N × B 11 Q–Q4 leads Black to disaster after 11 . . . N(B5)–Q3? 12 Q × NP

Q–B3 13 Q × Q N × Q 14 R–K1 ch K–B1 (14 . . . K–Q1 15 B–N5 N–K1 16 N–K5 R–B1 17 N–N4 or 14 . . . N(B3)–K5 15 N–Q2 P–KB4 16 P–B3 would regain the piece for White while keeping his powerful initiative) 15 B–R6 ch K–N1 16 R–K5 N(B3)–K5 17 R–K1 P–KB4 18 R–K7 and Black is defenceless. Black can crawl out of this whole mess after 11 Q–Q4 by returning the piece with 11 . . . O–O 12 Q × N (K4) N–Q3 13 Q–Q3 but his position is still uncomfortably clogged up.

10 R–K1 N–K2
11 R × N P–Q3

This position is the natural consequence of the opening play. White remains a pawn behind and must now utilize his initiative before Black has time to castle and develop his remaining bishop.

12 B–KN5!

The extravagant 12 P–KN4 is more than adequately met by 12 . . . O–O! 13 P–N5 B–K4. White can regain his pawn, but the advance of the KNP leaves horrible weaknesses in its wake.

12 . . . B × B 13 N × B O–O

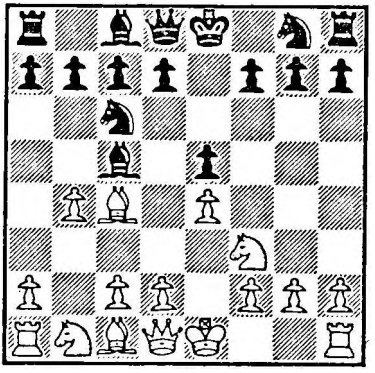
The safest move, though Black can also try 13 . . . P–KR3!? since neither 14 B–N5 ch B–Q2 15 Q–K2 B × B 16 Q × B ch Q–Q2 17 Q–K2 K–B1! nor 14 N × P K × N 15 Q–B3 ch N–B4 16 P–KN4 R–B1 17 P × N K–N1 is particularly convincing for White.

14 N × RP!

Just in time, before Black brings his bishop to B4. Now after 14 . . . K × N 15 Q–R5 ch K–N1 16 R–R4 P–KB4 White has no more than a draw. The main variation runs 17 Q–R7 ch K–B2 18 R–R6! (keeping the black knight from KN3) R–KN1 (freeing B1 for the king) 19 R–K1 (19 B–K2 K–B1 20 B–R5 P–KN3 gets White nowhere) 19 . . . Q–B1 20 B–N5 R–R1! 21 Q × R P × R 22 Q–R7 ch K–B3 23 R × N! Q × R 24 Q × RP ch with a draw by perpetual check.

And that explains why the Giuoco Piano is rarely seen today at the highest levels of play. White has at best a draw against accurate defence; the sting of these sharp lines has been removed by five hundred years of analysis.

THE EVANS GAMBIT: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 B–B4 4 P–QN4



Once described, rather melodramatically, as 'a gift by the gods to a languishing chess world', the gambit devised in 1826 by Captain W. D. Evans is now almost extinct. It is, however, still quite playable, though Black can equalize, as is the case with many gambits, by taking the pawn then returning it at an opportune moment.

4 . . . B × P

The craven 4 . . . B–N3 leaves White in control after 5 P–QR4! P–QR3 6 N–B3 N–B3 7 N–Q5. The advanced Q-side pawns have gained useful space on that wing.

5 P–B3

Already we see the principal ideas of this gambit. White has gained time for this move which both prepares P–Q4 and allows the queen access to N3 where it adds to the attack on KB7.

5 . . . B–K2

This is certainly the safest move for Black, keeping the white knight from advancing to N5. The moves 5 . . . B–B4 and 5 . . . B–R4 have featured in many brilliant White victories, though either of these may also be played:

(a) 5 . . . B–B4 6 P–Q4 P × P 7 O–O P–Q3 (after 7 . . . P × P 8 B × P ch K × B 9 Q–Q5 ch is good enough for White, while also 8 N × P and 8 Q–N3 give Black problems) 8 P × P B–N3 9 N–B3 B–N5 10 B–QN5 K–B1! (10 . . . B × N 11 P × B leaves Black in difficulties) 11 B–K3 KN–K2 12 P–QR4 and White's initiative and centre control compensate for his pawn deficit.

(b) 5 . . . B–R4 6 P–Q4 P × P (6 . . . P–Q3! 7 Q–N3 Q–Q2 8 P × P B–N3! is the safest defence) 7 O–O KN–K2 (7 . . . P × P 8 Q–N3 Q–B3 9 P–K5! was the sort of play that led to so many drastic White wins in the early days of this opening) 8 P × P P–Q4 and Black has hopes of equalizing.

6 P–Q4

6 Q–N3 N–R3 7 P–Q4 N–R4! 8 Q–R4 N × B 9 Q × N N–N5 10 P–KR3 (10 P × P P–Q3 is fine for Black) 10 . . . N–B3 11 P × P P–Q4! 12 P × P e.p. P × P with about equal chances.

6 . . . N–R4

The bishop must be dismissed from its threatening post. After 6 . . . P–Q3 White gains the advantage with 7 Q–N3 N–R4 8 B × P ch K–B1 9 Q–R4.

7 N × P

There is nothing better; after 7 B–Q3 P–Q3! 8 P × P P × P 9 N × P N–KB3 Black's development is the equal of White's and his pawn formation is sounder.

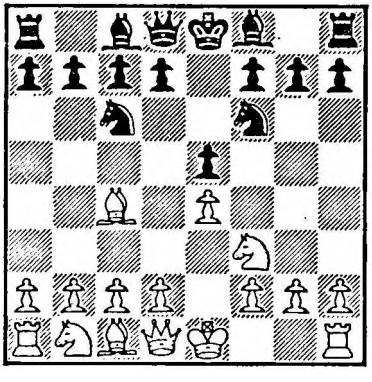
7 . . . N × B
8 N × N P–Q4

As so often this move completes Black's process of equalization.

After 9 P × P Q × P 10 N–K3 Q–Q1 Black has solved his opening problems.

In both the Giuoco Piano and the Evans Gambit we saw White dictating the play (though admittedly failing to obtain any advantage). The black bishop on QB4 provided a target for attack by White pawn advances. For that reason systems of defence evolved to deprive White of these attacking opportunities. By refraining from the move 3 . . . B–B4, Black can completely change the character of the play. The next two systems we discuss, the Two Knights' Defence and the Hungarian Defence, show how Black can play to avoid the complications of the Giuoco and the Evans.

THE TWO KNIGHTS' DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 N–B3



Black delays the development of his bishop in favour of bringing out the knight with an attack on the white KP. This looks completely natural until we notice that White has an immediate attacking opportunity with 4 N–N5. The complications after that move are very sharp indeed, so we shall look at them first, before coming to the more modern lines with 4 P–Q4. In both variations White is trying to exploit his

development lead by opening the position for quick attacking possibilities; as we have seen, that is a characteristic theme of the systems with 3 B–B4.

4 N–N5 P–Q4

The only way to answer White's threat to the KBP is to block the diagonal with this pawn. Surprisingly, the move 4 . . . B–B4!? is also playable here, ignoring the threat totally. Then White has several choices:

(a) 5 N × BP B × P ch! is Black's idea. After 6 K × B N × P ch 7 K–N1 (7 K–K3 Q–R5 also gives Black a powerful attack) 7 . . . Q–R5 8 P–KN3 N × NP 9 N × R (9 P × N Q × P ch 10 K–B1 R–B1 11 Q–R5 P–Q4! 12 B × P N–N5 ought to win for Black) 9 . . . N–Q5 10 P × N Q × P ch 11 K–B1 Q–B5 ch 12 K–N2 Q–N4 ch, Black draws by perpetual check. The most complex line is 6 K–B1 instead of taking the bishop. There can follow 6 . . . Q–K2 7 N × R P–Q4 8 P × P N–Q5 and the threat of . . . B–N5 gives Black a great initiative for his sacrificed rook.This position has been subjected to long analyses which seem to indicate that White can do no better than emerge with a draw.

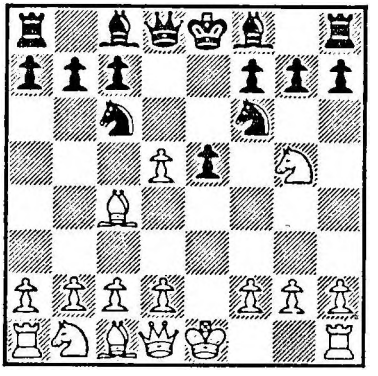
(b) 5 P–Q4!? hopes to gain a little freedom before grabbing material, but Black can throw a spanner in the works himself with 5 . . . P–Q4! when 6 B × P N × QP 7 N × BP Q–K2 8 N × R B–KN5 is no less hazardous for White than the previous variation.

(c) 5 B × P ch! K–K2 6 B–Q5 is White's most sensible path. After 6 . . . R–B1 7 N–KB3 P–Q3 8 P–B3 his misplaced king prevents Black from obtaining enough activity to compensate for the sacrificed pawn.

5 P × P (see diagram opposite)

Black must now be very careful indeed. The thoughtless recapture 5 . . . N × P? gives White the opportunity to expose the black king with 6 N × BP!? K × N 7 Q–B3 ch K–K3 8 N–B3. Black can probably survive this attack after 8 . . . N–N5 9 Q–K4 P–B3 10 P–QR3 N–R3 11 P–Q4 N–B2, but it is

none the less extremely unpleasant and, more important, White has the still stronger 6 P–Q4! P × P 7 O–O when the same attack is threatened with immediately devastating results. The sacrifice of the knight on KB7 in this line is known as the



Fegatello or Fried Liver Attack. I have never been able to discover why, but it is a nice name all the same.

5 . . . N–QR4!

Black plays a gambit! He will gain time by attacking the white minor pieces and seize the initiative to compensate for his lost pawn. Both 5 . . . P–N4?! and 5 . . . N–Q5 have also been played here, but the text is the most natural and reliable move.

6 B–N5 ch

After 6 P–Q3 P–KR3 7 N–KB3 P–K5! 8 Q–K2 N × B 9 P × N B–QB4 Black has free and easy development and good compensation for his pawn.

6 . . . P–B3

6 . . . B–Q2 is not in the spirit of the pawn sacrifice. After 7 Q–K2 White has better prospects. When you give up a pawn, energetic measures are called for.

7 P × P P × P

8 B–K2

8 Q–B3 gives Black the chance to offer another pawn with

8 . . . R–QN1! when 9 B × P ch N × B 10 Q × N ch N–Q2! gives him a fierce initiative. All the black pieces are ready to take aggressive posts in a combined attack against the white king.

8 . . . P–KR3
9 N–KB3

9 N–KR3 has also been seen, tempting Black to take this knight and leave White with an effective bishop pair. After simple development, however, White is likely to find his knight less effectively placed: 9 N–KR3 B–Q3 10 P–Q3 O–O 11 O–O N–Q4 and with . . . Q–R5 to follow, Black has a good game.

9 . . . P–K5
10 N–K5 B–Q3

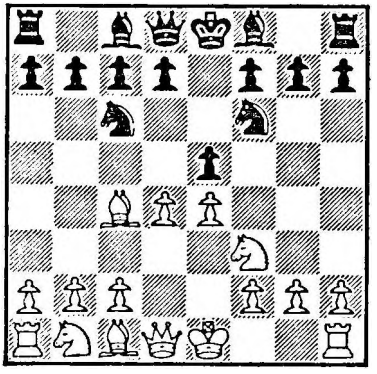
This is the characteristic main-line position of the Two Knights' Defence; Black has developed his pieces smoothly, but remains a pawn behind. Experience shows, however, that it is surprisingly difficult for White to complete his own development without having to face a strong Black attack. For example, after 11 P–KB4 (probably better than 11 P–Q4 P × P e.p. 12 N × QP Q–B2! preventing White from castling) 11 . . . P × P e.p. 12 N × P(B3) O–O 13 P–Q4 Q–B2 14 O–O P–B4, the open lines give Black active possibilities compensating for the pawn deficit. Chances are approximately equal.

Now we return to the other main line of the Two Knights' Defence with 4 **P–Q4**.

White opens the position, hoping that his extra move will be the basis for a quick attack (see diagram page 45).

4 . . . P × P

The most sensible course; 4 . . . N × KP 5 P × P leaves the knight on K5 rather stranded.



5 O–O

White plays for quick development, hoping to catch the black king in the centre. 5 P–K5 looks tempting, but is adequately met by 5 . . . P–Q4! when 6 B–QN5 N–K5 7 N × P B–Q2 8 B × N P × B 9 O–O B–QB4 gives equal chances.

5 . . . N × P!

Black correctly braves the apparent dangers of the open K-file. Instead, 5 . . . B–B4 allows the hazardous Max Lange Attack: 6 P–K5 P–Q4 7 P × N P × B 8 R–K1 ch B–K3 9 N–N5. There can follow 9 . . . Q–Q4! 10 N–QB3 Q–B4 11 QN–K4 O–O–O 12 KN × B P × N 13 P–KN4 Q–K4 14 B–N5 with enormous complications.

6 R–K1 P–Q4

7 B × P!

By this little trick, White regains his material. 7 N–B3?! is a less effective way to attempt a similar end; after 7 . . . P × N 8 B × P B–K3 9 B × N (9 R × N is met by 9 . . . N–K2) 9 . . . B–QN5 Black has the advantage.

7 . . . Q × B

8 N–B3 Q–QR4

The pin on the QP has ensured that White regains his piece. Now Black must complete his development while White spends time recouping the pawn.

9 N × N

9 R × N ch B–K3 10 N × P is far less effective, leaving Black with the initiative after 10 . . . O–O–O!

9 . . . B–K3

10 B–Q2

A subtle finesse, delaying the recapture of the pawn in the hope of keeping a lead in development. Instead 10 N(K4)–N5 O–O–O 11 N × B P × N 12 R × P B–Q3 is fine for Black.

10 . . . Q–Q4

The developing move 10 . . . B–N5 is a mistake, allowing White the little trick of 11 N × P! N × N 12 P–QB3, maintaining an advantage.

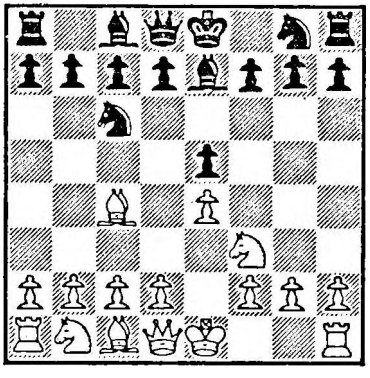
11 B–N5

Black must now play with care. 11 . . . P–KR3 would encourage 12 B–B6!

11 . . . B–Q3

This reply is quite safe. Now after 12 B–B6 O–O 13 N × P N × N 14 Q × N Q × Q 15 B × Q KR–Q1 the game reaches a totally level end-game.

THE HUNGARIAN DEFENCE:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 B–K2



This is the last of the openings with 3 B–B4 which we have to discuss. Black indicates that he is willing to adopt a slightly cramped but solid position, for the sake of avoiding the open nature of the earlier opening systems of this chapter. His plan is to strongpoint the KP, supporting it with . . . P–Q3 and maintaining a firm position in the centre while completing his development. The move 3 . . . B–K2 is a little more flexible than the immediate 3 . . . P–Q3, which White meets with 4 P–Q4 B–N5 and now either 5 P–Q5 or 5 P–B3, both of which maintain a slight advantage.

4 P–Q4

4 P–B3 is inappropriate here, since White has trouble defending his KP after 4 . . . N–B3, when Black is ready to counter with . . . P–Q4 himself.

4 . . . P–Q3

4 . . . P × P is illogical; after 5 N × P Black has nothing to show for having conceded space in the centre. The correct Black strategy is based on holding his KP firm.

5 N–B3

White also has chances of advantage after 5 P–Q5 N–N1 6 B–Q3! N–KB3 7 P–B4 when Black remains cramped. Note that Black's loss of time with his knight is partly compensated by White also losing a move with the bishop. The move P–Q5 is aesthetically undesirable with the bishop on QB4.

5 . . . N–B3

5 . . . B–N5 is met by 6 P–KR3 B × N 7 Q × B when the threat to the KBP prevents Black from taking the QP. After 7 . . . N–B3 8 P–Q5 White has the advantage.

6 P–KR3!

A gratuitous P–KR3 is often played out of fear in beginners' games. Here the move makes good sense. White has succeeded in advancing his pawns to K4 and Q4, which gives him the advantage in the centre. Black must not be allowed to create too much pressure against those pawns by pinning the knight with

6 . . . B–N5. The move P–KR3 has the additional point that the black QB now has no good square to develop to, and therefore his cramp becomes more serious.

6 . . . O–O
7 O–O

White maintains a slight advantage. Note that the attempt to free Black's game by 7 . . . N × KP!? rebounds after 8 N × N P–Q4 9 N–B3! P × B 10 P–Q5, followed by capture of the KP with a clear advantage to White. Black must therefore continue quietly reorganizing his pieces with 7 . . . P–KR3 followed by R–K1 and B–B1. His position is sound but uninspiring.

So ends our discussion of the King's Pawn openings with 3 B–B4. As we have seen, play is liable to explode into complications very early, from which Black has every reason to expect to emerge safely. We conclude this chapter with a couple of games exemplifying some more of the ideas in these systems.

WHITE: DUBOIS BLACK: STEINITZ
(London, 1962)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–B4 B–B4 4 O–O

A quiet and natural developing move, but as we shall see early castling is not totally without its drawbacks.

4 . . . N–B3 5 P–Q3 P–Q3 6 B–KN5

A move played with too little thought. Any of 6 P–B3, 6 N–B3 or 6 B–K3 would have been better.

6 . . . P–KR3! 7 B–R4?

Too late White decides that he does not want to exchange this bishop after all. All the same, 7 B × N Q × B 8 N–B3 was preferable.

7 . . . P–KN4!

Had Black already castled, this advance would be fraught with

danger. Quite apart from the obvious weakening of the king's position, there would be the possibility of an immediate sacrifice with N × NP to expose the black monarch. With the king still in the centre, however, the pawn advance is a perfectly sound attacking gesture against the already castled white king.

8 **B–KN3 P–KR4!**

The pawns continue forward. Now 9 N × NP allows the imaginative 9 . . . P–R5! 10 N × P P × B !! 11 N × Q B–KN5 12 Q–Q2 N–Q5! when there is no satisfactory defence to the threat of 13 . . . N–K7 ch followed by R × P mate. After 13 N–B3 Black has 13 . . . N–B6 ch! 14 P × N B × P 15 P × P R–R8 mate, while 13 P–KR3 allows the equally pretty 13 . . . N–K7 ch 14 K–R1 R × P ch! 15 P × R B–B6 mate; a glorious conception.

9 **P–KR4 B–KN5!**

Black does not allow the K-side to become blocked. Now the threat is 10 . . . N–Q5 leading to disruption of the white king's defences.

10 **P–B3 Q–Q2 11 P–Q4!?**

White is fighting too. This pawn sacrifice is his only chance to create some counterplay before Black castles long and brings his other rook into the attack. Instead 11 P × P P–R5 12 B–R2 N–R2 would leave Black in total command.

11 . . . **P × QP** 12 **P–K5 P × KP** 13 **B × KP N × B** 14 **N × N**

The clever tactics have enabled White to break the pin, but the attack continues.

14 . . . **Q–B4!** 15 **N × B P × N** 16 **B–Q3 Q–Q4** 17 **P–N4**

White hopes for 17 . . . B–N3 18 P–QB4, but Steinitz realizes that without losing time the attack down the KR-file will be decisive.

17 . . . **O–O–O!** 18 **P–QB4 Q–B3** 19 **P × B R × P** 20 **P–B3**

The only defence to the threat of doubling rooks.

20 . . . QR–R1 21 **P × P Q–K1!**

21 . . . N × P? failed to 22 B–B5 ch and 23 B × N. Now, however, the threat of 22 . . . Q–K6 ch is decisive.

22 **Q–K1 Q–K6 ch!** 23 **Q × Q P × Q** 24 **P–N3 R–R8 ch** 25 **K–N2 R(1)–R7 ch** 26 **K–B3 R × R ch** 27 **B × R R–B7 ch** 28 **K × P R × B**

This forced sequence has regained Black his piece and the resulting ending is easily won since the white pieces cannot participate. The rest was unnecessary and can be given without comment:

29 **P–R4 K–Q2** 30 **K–Q3 N × P** 31 **K–B3 N–K6** 32 **R–R2 R × N** 33 **R–Q2 ch K–B3** 34 **R–K2 R–B8 ch** 35 **K–Q2 R–B7 ch** 36 **K × N R × R ch** 37 **K × R P–B4** 38 **K–K3 K × P** 39 **K–Q3 P–B5** and White finally resigned.

Finally, an Evans Gambit from the days of this opening's glory:

WHITE: ANDERSSEN BLACK: ZUKERTORT
(Berlin, 1868)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 **N–KB3 N–QB3** 3 **B–B4 B–B4** 4 **P–QN4 B × P** 5 **P–B3 B–B4** 6 **O–O P–Q3** 7 **P–Q4 P × P** 8 **P × P B–N3** 9 **P–Q5**

This was the old main line of the Evans. Later 9 N–B3 came to be preferred, maintaining flexibility of the centre pawns.

9 . . . N–R4 10 **B–N2 N–K2**

10 . . . N × B? 11 B × P and White wins the rook. Now 11 B × P? loses to 11 . . . R–KN1.

11 **B–Q3 O–O** 12 **N–B3 N–N3** 13 **N–K2 P–QB4** 14 **R–B1 R–N1** 15 **Q–Q2 P–B3** 16 **K–R1 B–B2** 17 **N–N3 P–N4**

Black has finally begun to move his Q-side pawns. Objectively his extra pawn should give him a clear advantage now, but Anderssen shows that White still has good attacking possibilities.

18 **N–B5 P–N5?**

A bad strategic error which stifles Black's counterplay. 18 . . . P–B5! 19 B–K2 P–N5 would have left Black on top.

19 **R–KN1!**

Avoiding the threat of 19 . . . P–B5 20 KB × P N × B 21 R × N B–R3, while also preparing to advance the NP.

19 . . . **B–N3** 20 **P–N4 N–K4** 21 **B** × **N QP** × **B** 22 **R–N3 R–B2** 23 **P–N5 B** × **N** 24 **P** × **B Q** × **P?**

Black's position was already difficult, but this is the decisive mistake.

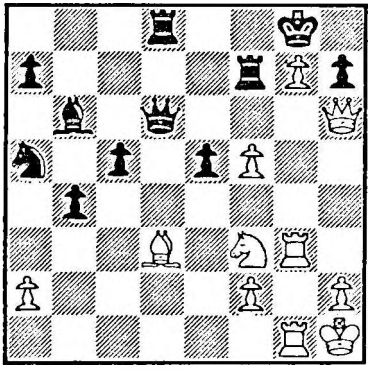
25 **P** × **P R–Q1**

25 . . . R × P 26 B–B4! loses Black his queen.

26 **QR–KN1! K–R1**

After 26 . . . Q × B White mates quickly with 27 Q–R6.

27 **P** × **P ch K–N1** 28 **Q–R6 Q–Q3**



In this position White announced mate in five moves:

29 **Q** × **P ch! K** × **Q** 30 **P–B6 ch K–N1**

30 . . . Q × B 31 R–R3 ch shortens the process.

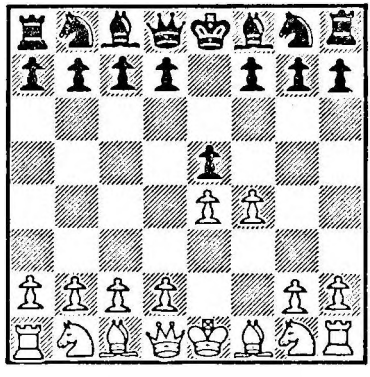
31 **B–R7 ch! K** × **B** 32 **R–R3 ch K–N1** 33 **R–R8 mate.**

CHAPTER 3

Open Games II: 1 P–K4 P–K4

As we saw in the previous chapter, fluid piece play was the main theme of the analyses of the old Italian masters. By the nineteenth century the balance of power had shifted to France, Germany and England; the importance of pawn play was more generally recognized, but the desire for quick attacks had not abated. The King's Gambit was the most popular opening, White offering a pawn to lure the black KP out of the way and increase White's central control. In this chapter we shall examine that opening, its close relative the Vienna, and other open games fashionable at that time.

THE KING'S GAMBIT: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 P–KB4



The idea of this opening is simple: White offers a pawn to give himself the opportunity to dominate the centre. He also

hopes that the opening of the KB-file will give attacking chances after castling K-side.

2 . . . P × P

Naturally acceptance of the gambit must be considered the main line; White will not find it so easy to regain the pawn. Black has, however, two perfectly playable methods of declining the gambit:

(a) 2 . . . B–B4 3 N–KB3 (not 3 P × P?? Q–R5 ch winning for Black) 3 . . . P–Q3 4 N–B3 (4 P–B3 is a good alternative, playing for a big centre with P–Q4) 4 . . . N–KB3 5 B–B4 N–B3 6 P–Q3 B–KN5 7 N–QR4! and White will be able to castle after exchanging the bishop, with chances of an advantage thanks to his more active pawns. Note that 6 . . . P–QR3 in this line, in order to retain the bishop, would have been met by the space-gaining 7 P–B5 threatening an eventual pawn storm on the K-side with P–KN4 and P–N5.

(b) 2 . . . P–Q4 is the Falkbeer Counter-gambit. After 3 KP × P P–K5 the white KBP does not look so attractively placed. White does best to continue 4 P–Q3 N–KB3 5 P × P (5 N–Q2 P × P 6 B × P N × P also leads to equal chances) 5 . . . N × KP 6 B–K3 (6 N–KB3 B–QB4 7 Q–K2 B–B4 gives Black an active game; 8 P–KN4? is met by 8 . . . O–O! 9 P × B R–K1) 6 . . . Q–R5 ch 7 P–N3 N × P 8 N–KB3 Q–K2! 9 P × N Q × B ch 10 Q–K2 leading to a roughly level end-game.

3 N–KB3

After the immediate 3 P–Q4 Black causes too much disruption with 3 . . . Q–R5 ch. 3 B–B4 is, however, not a bad alternative since 3 . . . Q–R5 ch 4 K–B1 is not too inconvenient, and White will be able to gain time attacking the black queen. 3 B–B4 is best met by 3 . . . N–KB3 4 N–QB3 P–B3! followed by . . . P–Q4 giving Black an easy game with quick development.

3 . . . P–Q4

This may not be the best move, but it is certainly the main reason why the King's Gambit is seen so little nowadays. In

the old days, Black would always try to hang on to his extra pawn with . . . P–KN4; the modern approach says give back the pawn for an easy life. Here are some examples of common lines in which Black decides to keep the material:

The Muzio Gambit: 3 . . . P–KN4 4 B–B4 P–N5 5 O–O! P × N 6 Q × P with a ferocious attack; 6 . . . Q–B3 is met by 7 P–K5 Q × P 8 P–Q3 when analysis has shown White's initiative good enough for a draw.

The Kieseritzky Gambit: 3 . . . P–KN4 4 P–KR4 P–N5 5 N–K5 (5 N–N5 is the more dubious Allgaier Gambit) 5 . . . N–KB3 6 P–Q4 P–Q3 7 N–Q3 N × P 8 B × P with enough play for the pawn.

Fischer's Defence: 3 . . . P–Q3!? to meet 4 P–Q4 with 4 . . . P–KN4 5 B–B4 B–N2 6 P–KR4 P–KR3 7 P–B3 N–QB3 leading back to old positions without giving White the opportunity to play the Muzio or Kieseritzky gambits. The move 3 . . . P–KR3 is another alternative with similar ideas behind it.

Other interesting variations are introduced by the moves 3 . . . N–KB3 and 3 . . . B–K2, but their discussion is beyond the scope of this book.

4 P × P

4 P–K5? is indeed met by 4 . . . P–KN4, when White no longer has the centre control necessary to claim any compensation for the pawn deficit.

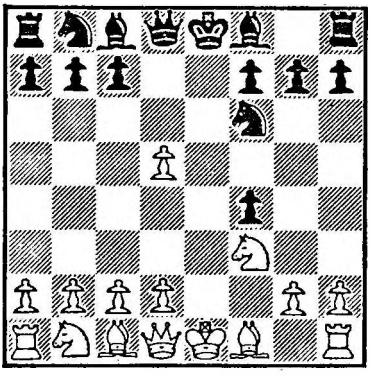
4 . . . N–KB3 (see upper diagramopposite)

Black will recapture the QP with his knight and can look forward to easy development of his pieces for the middle game. White can hope for no more than equality. Some examples of the possibilities are as follows:

(a) 5 B–N5 ch P–B3 6 P × P N × P 7 P–Q4 B–Q3 8 Q–K2 ch B–K3 9 N–N5 O–O! and Black seizes the initiative.

(b) 5 P–QB4 P–B3 6 P–Q4 B–N5 ch! (6 . . . P × P 7 P–B5! is more difficult for Black) 7 N–B3 P × P 8 B × P O–O with a good game for Black.

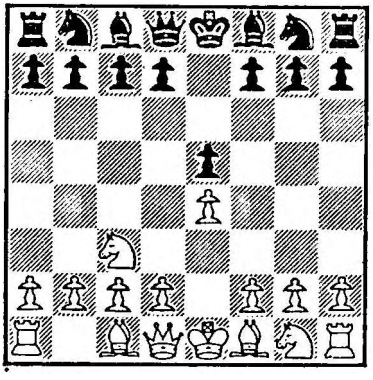
(c) 5 N–B3 N × P 6 N × N (6 B–B4 N × N 7 NP × N



B–Q3 also gives White nothing) Q × N 7 P–Q4 B–K2 8 P–B4 Q–K5 ch 9 K–B2 B–KB4 and Black is in no danger.

In these variations, White always has the prospect of a better end-game if he can recapture the gambit pawn on his KB4. The speed was curiously fast with which the King's Gambit turned from a fearsome attacking weapon into a mere hope for a better end-game. Now variations such as the last given here are considered likely to lead just to equality and the opening is employed nowadays mainly for its surprise value.

THE VIENNA GAME: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–QB3



By playing his knight to QB3, White discourages his opponent from playing . . . P–Q4, while also leaving his KBP free to advance. The idea is a sort of delayed King's Gambit, attacking the black KP with P–KB4, but preventing the freeing manoeuvres possible in the King's Gambit itself.

2 . . . N–KB3

2 . . . N–QB3 is also good, leading to the Bishop's Opening (next to be considered) after 3 B–B4 N–B3 or to a strange sort of Vienna Gambit after 3 P–B4 P × P 4 N–B3 N–B3 5 P–K5 N–KR4 6 B–B4 P–Q3.

3 P–B4

3 B–B4 again leads to the Bishop's Opening. 3 P–KN3 is a quiet alternative to the text, giving Black the choice between 3 . . . P–Q4 4 P × P N × P 5 B–N2 N × N 6 NP × N B–Q3 and 3 . . . B–B4 4 B–N2 N–B3 5 P–Q3 P–Q3 6 N–R4 B–K3 followed by castling long and active play on the K-side.

3 . . . P–Q4!

3 . . . P × P? 4 P–K5 leaves Black in a terrible mess. Once again the correct reaction to White's aggression is this central break with P–Q4.

4 P × KP

4 P × QP P–K5 gives Black a good version of the Falkbeer Counter-gambit.

4 . . . N × P

5 N–B3

Simple development is White's best continuation. 5 Q–B3 is met by 5 . . . N–QB3! when 6 N × N? N–Q5! is bad for White.

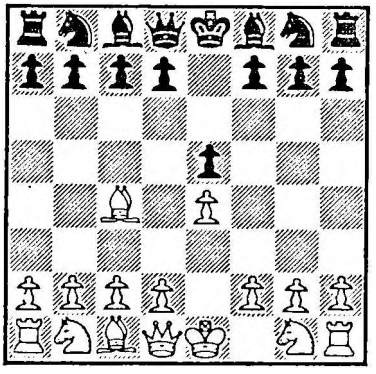
5 . . . B–K2

The aggressive 5 . . . B–QB4 is not as good as it looks; after 6 Q–K2 B–B7 ch 7 K–Q1 N × N ch 8 QP × N B–N3 9 B–N5 White can untangle with K–Q2, R–Q1 and K–B1 keeping some advantage. 5 . . . B–KN5 is a good alternative to the text, but the non-committal 5 . . . B–K2 is simplest.

6 P–Q4 O–O
7 B–Q3 P–KB4

The position is equal; if White leaves the black knight supported by both pawns, then he has no hope of advantage, while after 8 P × P e.p. B × P 9 O–O N–B3 the game is simplified and level.

THE BISHOP'S OPENING: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 B–B4



This is a distant cousin of the King's Gambit and Vienna. White again leaves free the path for his KBP to advance. Unfortunately, Black has several possibilities of creating such diversions that White has no time for P–KB4.

2 . . . N–KB3

This developing move, attacking the white KP, is the most natural rejoinder.

3 P–Q3

After 3 N–QB3, Black has the option of playing 3 . . . N × P!? inviting the complications of 4 Q–R5! (4 N × N P–Q4 or 4 B × P ch K × B 5 N × N P–Q4 are both good for Black) 4 . . . N–Q3 5 B–N3 N–B3 (5 . . . B–K2 is safer, leading to equality after 6 N–B3 N–B3 7 N × P O–O) 6 N–N5 P–KN3 7 Q–B3 P–B4 8 Q–Q5 Q–K2 9 N × P ch K–Q1 10 N × R

P–N3. Black will regain the knight trapped in the corner, leaving a position where his mobile centre pawns give good compensation for the exchange. An unusual example of a crude attacking plan by White reaping material dividends, but at the cost of valuable time.

3 . . . P–B3

Black prepares to shut out the bishop with P–Q4. 3 . . . N–B3 is less dynamic but also good. There can follow 4 N–QB3 (4 P–B4 is strongly countered by 4 . . . P–Q4!) 4 . . . B–N5 (4 . . . B–B4 5 P–B4 P–Q3 6 N–B3 leads back to the King's Gambit Declined) 5 N–B3 P–Q3 6 O–O N–QR4 with equal chances. Note that the immediate 3 . . . P–Q4 opens the position prematurely. After 4 P × P N × P 5 N–KB3 N–QB3 6 O–O B–K2 7 R–K1 White is already developing a dangerous initiative. Black must always be wary of opening the game too early, particularly when White has wasted no time on non-developing moves.

4 N–KB3 B–K2!

4 . . . P–Q4 5 B–N3! leaves the black centre difficult to support. 5 . . . P × P is met by 6 N–N5, while 5 . . . B–Q3 6 N–B3 B–K3 7 B–N5 gives White unpleasant pressure against the d5 pawn.

5 N–B3

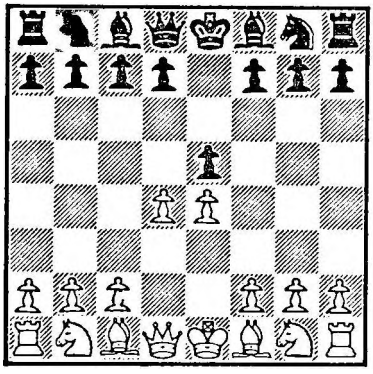
5 N × P? would lose a piece to 5 . . . Q–R4 ch.

5 . . . P–Q3

With both sides having settled for a single advance of the QP, neither has won the battle for the centre. The game is level. In the later opening and early middle game, we may expect both players to continue with plans to conquer the centre by playing P–Q4. Black will need to add to the protection of his KP, so continues with a plan such as O–O, R–K1 and B–B1; while White relies on his active pieces to discourage Black's central advance and thinks himself of preparing a later P–Q4 after playing N–K2, N–KN3 and P–QB3. We shall encounter

similar ideas when we discuss the strategic thoughts behind the Ruy Lopez.

THE CENTRE GAME: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 P–Q4



The most obvious way to clear away Black's central presence and to open lines for the white pieces after 1 P–K4 P–K4 is by playing 2 P–Q4. As we shall see, however, such a quick advance of the QP always brings with it loss of time and is not to be recommended.

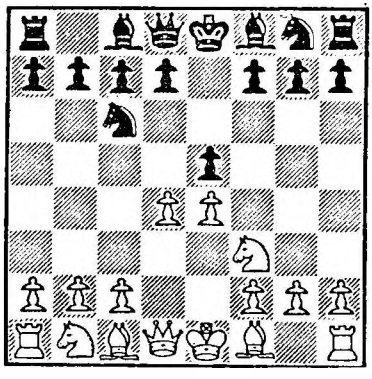
2 . . . P × P
3 Q × P

3 P–QB3 is the Danish Gambit. White offers pawns for quick development; in the main line, Black simply gives them back and solves all probelms: 3 . . . P × P 4 B–QB4 (4 N × P is less risky, leading to positions characteristic of the Scotch Gambit, which we come to later) 4 . . . P × P 5 QB × P P–Q4! 6 B × QP (6 P × P blocks the line of the bishop; after 6 . . . N–KB3 7 N–QB3 B–Q3 Black has no difficulties) 6 . . . N–KB3 7 B × P ch!? (7 N–QB3 B–K2 is fine for Black) 7 . . . K × B 8 Q × Q B–N5 ch. Black wins back the queen and reaches an end-game where his passed pawns are at least as good as the white ones.

3 . . . N–QB3
4 Q–K3 N–B3

White's loss of time with his queen gives Black a useful lead in development. Now the onus is on White to defend his centre, rather than, as he hopes, using it as the basis for a later attack. A typical continuation is 5 N–QB3 B–N5 6 B–Q2 O–O 7 O–O–O R–K1 8 B–B4 N–QR4 9 B–Q3 P–Q4! striking back in the centre and ensuring an excellent game for Black.

THE SCOTCH GAME:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4



This presumably ought really to be called 'The Scottish Game' but for some unaccountable reason has always carried the name of the whisky rather than the gentlemen who first played it. The idea is one step more sophisticated than the centre game: White exchanges the central black pawn in the hope of increasing his own influence in the middle of the board. The drawback is again loss of time; Black gains a move for development while White carries out his exchanging manoeuvre.

3 . . . P × P
4 N × P

4 P–B3 is the dangerous Scotch (or Göring) Gambit. Black has two choices:

Scotch Gambit Declined: 4 . . . P–Q4 5 KP × P Q × P 6 P × P B–KN5 7 B–K2 B–N5 ch 8 N–B3 B × KN 9 B × B Q–B5! (Not 9 . . . Q × QP?? 10 B × N ch) 10 B × N ch P × B 11 Q–K2 ch Q × Q ch 12 K × Q N–K2 with a level end-game. *Scotch Gambit Accepted:* 4 . . . P × P 5 B–QB4 P–Q3 (5 . . . P × P 6 B × P gives White a more dangerous attack than in the Danish Gambit; the knight on Black's QB3 makes it difficult for him to play . . . P–Q4, always met by P × P. A good alternative, however, is 5 . . . N–B3 6 N × P B–N5 7 P–K5 P–Q4) 6 N × P N–B3 7 Q–N3 (7 N–KN5 N–K4 8 B–N3 P–KR3 9 P–B4! B–N5! is equally complex, but Black should emerge well) 7 . . . Q–Q2 8 N–KN5 N–K4 9 B–N5 P–B3 10 P–B4 N(K4)–N5 with a position of enormous complication. The Scotch Gambit is no opening to enter unprepared. Remember, however, that declining the offer is perfectly satisfactory for Black.

4 . . . B–B4

Black can also develop his other knight with 4 . . . N–B3. After 5 N–QB3 (or 5 N × N NP × N 6 P–K5 Q–K2 7 Q–K2 N–Q4 8 P–QB4 B–R3 9 N–Q2 N–N5 10 N–B3 P–QB4 11 P–QR3 N–B3 with about equal chances) 5 . . . B–N5 6 N × N NP × N 7 B–Q3 P–Q4 8 P × P (8 P–K5 N–N5 9 B–KB4 P–B3 gives White nothing) 8 . . . Q–K2 ch 9 Q–K2 P × P a level end-game is reached.

5 N–N3

The third move of this piece, but here the loss of time is justifiable owing to the attack on the black bishop. Note that 5 N × N could have been met by 5 . . . Q–B3! threatening mate and thereby avoiding any weakening of the black pawns by recapturing next move with the queen. Supporting the knight with 5 B–K3 gives Black easy development after 5 . . . Q–B3 6 P–QB3 KN–K2 7 B–K2 P–Q4.

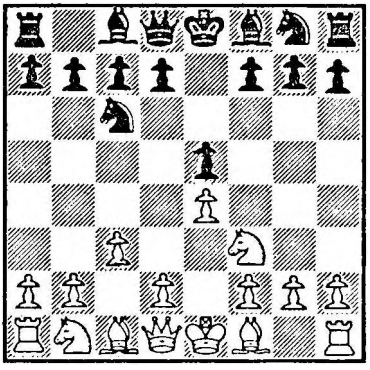
5 . . . B–N3

6 P–QR4 P–QR3

White's lone centre pawn is insufficiently supported by pieces

for him to hope for any advantage from the opening. There can follow 7 N–B3 P–Q3 (7 . . . Q–B3 is another good move) 8 N–Q5 B–R2 9 B–K2 N–B3 10 O–O (10 B–KN5? is met by 10 . . . B × P ch!) 10 . . . N × N 11 P × N N–K4 with equal chances.

PONZIANI'S OPENING: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–B3



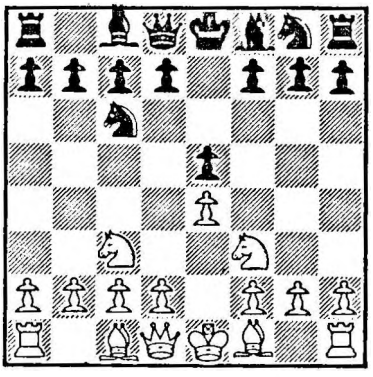
This is the last of our systems in which White tries for an early P–Q4. Here the idea is to recapture with a pawn and maintain a big centre. The drawback lies in the removal of the QB3 square from the white knight. Black has two good replies to take advantage of that fact:

(a) 3 . . . **N–B3** attacks the KP and leads to an equal position after 4 P–Q4 N × KP 5 P–Q5 (5 P × P B–B4 is good for Black) 5 . . . N–N1 6 B–Q3 (6 N × P B–B4 is again fine for Black) 6 . . . N–B4 7 N × P N × B ch 8 N × N P–Q3 9 O–O B–K2. Black's bishop pair is balanced by White's extra space.

(b) 3 . . . **P–Q4** is more complicated. White should not play 4 P × P Q × P since the black queen can no longer be attacked by a knight (that pawn is still on QB3!). Therefore he plays 4 Q–R4 (or 4 B–N5 P × P 5 N × P Q–Q4 6 Q–R4 KN–K2) 4 . . . N–B3!? 5 N × P B–Q3 6 N × N P × N

and Black has good compensation for his pawn or two after either 7 Q × P ch B–Q2 or 7 P–Q3 O–O.

THE THREE KNIGHTS' GAME AND THE FOUR KNIGHTS' GAME: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 N–B3



This is one of the quietest of the open games. White simply brings his knights out, without any intention of forcing the play early on.

3 . . . . N–B3

This brings about the Four Knights' Game; any other reply gives the Three Knights'. The best of these is 3 . . . P–KN3 (3 . . . B–N5 meets with the annoying 4 N–Q5) when Black plans to develop his bishop to N2 with a strong hold on White's Q4 square. Note, incidentally, that 3 . . . B–B4, with the same idea, would have been met by 4 N × P! N × N 5 P–Q4.

After 3 . . . P–KN3 White can try to open the game with 4 P–Q4 (4 B–B4 is a good alternative) 4 . . . P × P and now 5 N–Q5!? is an interesting try (5 N × P B–N2 is fine for Black). Black must now be careful, but should obtain good chances: 5 . . . B–N2 6 B–KN5 QN–K2! (and not 6 . . .

KN–K2? 7 N × QP! B × N 8 Q × B! N × Q 9 N–B6 ch K–B1 10 B–R6 mate!) 7 N × QP P–QB3 8 N × N N × N 9 Q–Q2 P–KR3 10 B–R4 P–Q4 and Black has equalized.

4 B–N5

4 P–Q4 P × P 5 N × P reaches a position from the Scotch Game, but Black also has the interesting possibility of 4 . . . B–N5 with a perfectly good game.

4 . . . B–N5

Black happily stays symmetrical. Also good is 4 . . . N–Q5 (Rubinstein's Defence) when White may have nothing better than 5 N × N P × N 6 P–K5 P × N 7 P × N Q × P 8 QP × P Q–K4 ch 9 Q–K2 with dead equality. Instead 5 B–R4 B–B4 6 N × P O–O leaves Black with a dangerous initiative for his pawn.

5 O–O O–O
6 P–Q3 P–Q3
7 B–N5 B × N!

It is time to stop copying. 7 . . . B–N5? would lose: 8 N–Q5 N–Q5 N × B N × B 10 N–Q5 N–Q5 11 Q–Q2! P–B3 (or 11 . . . B × N 12 B × N Q–Q2 13 N–K7 ch K–R1 14 B × P ch K × B 15 Q–N5 ch K–R1 16 Q–B6 mate) 12 N × N ch P × N 13 B–R4 B × N 14 Q–R6 N–K7 ch (or 14 . . . Q–Q2 15 P–KR3! N–K7 ch 16 K–R2 wins) 15 K–R1 B × P ch 16 K × B N–B5 ch 17 K–R1 N–N3 18 R–KN1 and White has a winning attack.

8 P × B Q–K2
9 R–K1 N–Q1!

This was the idea behind Black's previous move; the knight comes to K3 to rid himself of the troublesome bishop. After 10 P–Q4 N–K3 11 B–QB1 (or 11 B–KR4 N–B5) 11 . . . P–B4 Black has an equal game. Note that 12 P × KP P × P 13 N × P? would lose to 13 . . . N–B2.

Finally in this chapter, we come to some of Black's options to avoid the main-line open games. After 1 **P–K4 P–K4**

2 N–KB3, there are five possible moves besides the natural 2 . . . N–QB3. Three of these are bizarre, but the other two are positionally well-motivated. We shall clear away the rubbish first:

DAMIANO'S DEFENCE:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 P–KB3

This does not even provide real protection to the KP. White can play 3 N × P! when 3 . . . P × N 4 Q–R5 ch P–N3 (4 . . . K–K2 5 Q × P ch K–B2 6 B–B4 ch wins quickly) 5 Q × KP ch winning the rook in the corner, leaves Black hopelessly placed. Therefore 3 N × P is best met with 3 . . . Q–K2 4 N–B3 Q × P ch 5 B–K2 when White will gain still more time attacking the exposed queen.

THE QUEEN'S PAWN COUNTER-GAMBIT:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 P–Q4?!

If Black could get away with moves like this there would surely be something wrong with chess. Either 3 **P × P** P–K5 4 Q–K2 N–KB3 5 P–Q3 B–K2 (5 . . . Q × P 6 KN–Q2 also leaves Black a pawn behind for nothing) 6 P × P O–O 7 N–B3 R–K1 8 B–Q2; or 3 **N × P** P × P 4 B–B4 Q–N4 5 B × P ch K–K2 6 P–Q4 Q × NP 7 R–B1 B–R6 8 B–QB4 will be sufficient to give White a practically decisive advantage.

THE LATVIAN GAMBIT (or GRECO COUNTER-GAMBIT):
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 P–KB4?!

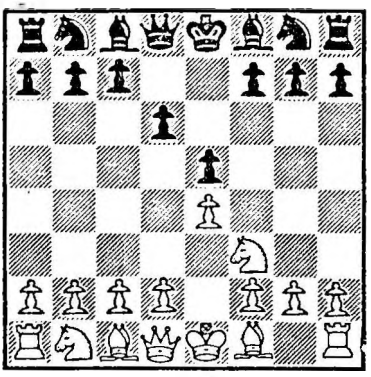
This is another violent attempt to wrest the initiative. White can attempt a direct refutation with 3 **B–B4** P × P 4 N × P

Q–N4 5 P–Q4 Q × P 6 Q–R5 ch P–KN3 7 B–B7 ch K–Q1 8 B × P Q × R ch 9 K–K2, but the complications are enormous. In practice, particularly as one is only likely to meet this opening once in a lifetime, there is a strong case for taking a simpler route to a White advantage. 3 **P** × **P** P–K5 4 N–K5 N–KB3 5 B–K2 P–Q3 6 B–R5 ch K–K2 7 N–B7 Q–K1 again allows Black to seek refuge in complications, so the most straightforward line for White is 3 **N** × **P Q–B3** (the only good defence to the threat of 4 Q–R5 ch) and now either **4 N–B4 P** × **P 5 N–B3 Q–K3 6 P–Q3 P** × **P ch 7 N–K3 P** × **P 8 Q** × **P** with a huge initiative; or **4 P–Q4 P–Q3** (4 . . . P × P 5 B–B4 is very bad for Black) 5 **N–B4 P** × **P 6 N–K3 N–B3 7 P–Q5 N–K4 8 B–K2** and White's development lead gives him the advantage; after castling he can open the position with P–KB3, causing further embarrassment to the black queen. The main advantage of the Latvian Gambit is that it is not as bad as it looks, but that is hardly enough to equalize!

That leaves us with the two 'respectable' alternatives for Black on his second move: 2 . . . P–Q3 and 2 . . . N–KB3. Of these, 2 . . . P–Q3 (Philidor's Defence) is solid but unambitious, while 2 . . . N–KB3 (Petroff's Defence) has a great deal more life to it, particularly if White decides to play aggressively.

PHILIDOR'S DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 P–Q3

We often saw, in the Giuoco Piano and related openings, Black countering, with a nicely timed . . . P–Q4, White's early attempts to attack. By playing 2 . . . P–Q3, Black virtually renounces this possibility owing to the loss of time involved. Instead he gives White a free hand, relying himself on a solid defensive formation with N–KB3, B–K2, QN–Q2 and O–O.



3 P–Q4

In the Centre Game and Scotch Game, this move gave Black the chance to take an initiative thanks to his development lead. Here, however, Black has played a pawn move rather than bringing out a piece, so White may take the centre without conceding his initiative.

3 . . . N–KB3

Giving up the centre with 3 . . . P × P is less in the spirit of Black's formation; after 4 N × P P–KN3 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 B–K3 N–KB3 7 Q–Q2 O–O 8 O–O–O White has the better chances. The text move is better than the passive 3 . . . N–Q2 when 4 B–QB4 gives immediate problems since 4 . . . B–K2? loses a pawn to 5 P × P N × P (5 . . . P × P 6 Q–Q5 wins for White!) 6 N × N P × N 7 Q–R5.

4 N–QB3

4 P × P N × P is less convincing; White loses his central space advantage with the exchange of pawns.

4 . . . QN–Q2
5 B–QB4 B–K2
6 O–O

White also has several violent alternatives, but none of them quite works:

(a) 6 B × P ch?! K × B 7 N–N5 ch K–N1 8 N–K6 Q–K1

9 N × BP Q–N3 10 N × R Q × NP 11 R–B1 P × P 12 Q × P N–K4 and White faces a huge attack from the black minor pieces and queen.

(b) 6 P × P P × P 7 B × P ch is an improved version of the same idea. After 7 . . . K × B 8 N–N5 ch Black has the choice between 8 . . . K–N3!? 9 P–KR4 P–KR4 10 P–B4! P × P 11 N–K2 B–Q3 12 P–K5! N × P 13 N × P ch K–R3 when 14 N–B7 ch N × N 15 N–K6 ch wins the queen, but at great cost; and the safer 8 . . . K–N1 9 N–K6 Q–K1 10 N × BP Q–N3 11 N × R Q × NP 12 R–B1 N–B4 13 B–K3 B–R6, reaching an ending with equal chances.

(c) 6 N–KN5 O–O 7 B × P ch R × B 8 N–K6 Q–K1 9 N × BP is the final way to hunt down the rook, but here too after 9 . . . Q–Q1 10 N × R P–QN4! 11 N × P Q–R4 ch Black has more than sufficient counterplay.

6 . . . P–B3

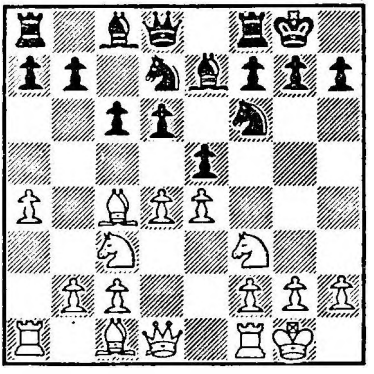
This illustrates one of the basic themes of the Philidor Defence: Black hopes to expand on the Q-side with . . . P–QN4. Note how the knight on Q2 does not interfere with the planned advance of the pawns.

7 P–QR4!

Correctly preventing . . . P–QN4 which would give Black an annoying initiative.

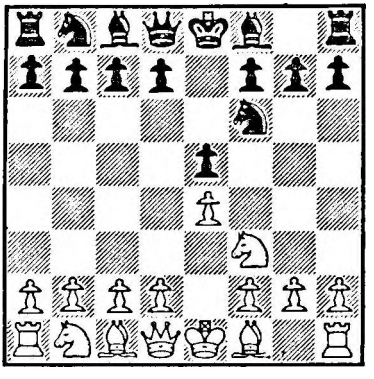
7 . . . O–O (see upper diagram opposite)

This is the characteristic position from Philidor's Defence. White clearly has more room for his pieces, but the black position is very resilient and contains chances of counter-attack. A typical continuation is 8 P–R5 (further restricting the black Q-side pawns) 8 . . . P–KR3 9 B–R2 R–K1 10 P × P! (This move has to be timed well; White gives up his central advantage to create attacking chances.) 10 . . . P × P (10 . . . N × P 11 N–Q4 gives White a clear plus after 12 P–B4. This was the reason for retreating the bishop on move 9; it is no longer under attack from the black knight on K4) 11 Q–K2 B–B1 12 R–Q1 Q–B2 13 N–KR4. White's development lead



and active pieces give him the preferable position, but note that Black has avoided creating any weaknesses so retains a solid, albeit rather defensive, position.

PETROFF'S DEFENCE:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3



Instead of defending his KP, Black counter-attacks the white pawn.

3 N × P

3 P–Q4 is a good alternative; Black has two possibilities:
(a) 3 . . . N × P 4 B–Q3 P–Q4 5 N × P B–Q3 6 O–O O–O

7 N–Q2 and White's development lead gives him a nagging initiative after either 7 . . . N × N 8 B × N or 7 . . . N–KB3 8 QN–B3.

(b) 3 . . . P × P 4 P–K5 N–K5 5 Q × P P–Q4 6 P × P e.p. N × QP 7 N–B3 N–B3 8 Q–KB4 P–KN3 and the absence of central pawns makes it very difficult for White to gain any advantage. The best plan is to castle Q-side and hope to attack on the other wing, but Black too can castle long and ought to be able to organize a satisfactory defence.

3 . . . . P–Q3!

3 . . . N × P? is a bad mistake. After 4 Q–K2 the knight cannot run away owing to the reply 5 N–B6 ch. Thus Black must try 4 Q–K2 Q–K2 (4 . . . P–Q4 5 P–Q3 Q–K2 6 P × N Q × N 7 P × P wins a pawn) 5 Q × N P–Q3 6 P–Q4 P–KB3 regaining the piece, but conceding White ■ practically decisive attack after 7 N–QB3 QP × N 8 N–Q5 Q–Q3 9 P × P P × P 10 B–KB4.

4 N–KB3 N × P

5 P–Q4

5 Q–K2 is very dull; after 5 . . . Q–K2 6 P–Q3 N–KB3 queens are quickly exchanged, and White's extra move counts for little in such a symmetrical end-game.

5 . . . P–Q4

Black is suddenly a move ahead, but we must not be deceived into believing that this solves his problems. The knight on K5 is not as secure as it seems; White's plan is to undermine this piece, either by direct attack (B–Q3 and R–K1) or by nibbling away its defence (by playing P–QB4). A typical continuation is as follows: 6 B–Q3 B–K2 (or 6 . . . B–Q3 7 O–O O–O 8 P–QB4! P–QB3 9 Q–B2 R–K1 10 N–B3 with advantage) 7 O–O N–QB3 8 R–K1 B–KN5 and now:

(a) 9 P–B3 P–B4 10 Q–N3 O–O 11 QN–Q2 K–R1 12 P–KR3 B–R4?! (12 . . . B × N 13 N × B R–QN1 gives White the advantage, but is safer for Black) 13 Q × NP R–B3 14

Q–N3 R–N3 15 B–K2 and White defends satisfactorily, retaining his extra pawn.

(b) 9 P–B4 N–B3 10 P × P KN × P 11 N–B3 O–O (not 11 . . . N × P? 12 Q–R4 ch) 12 B–K4 B–K3 (or 12 . . . N–B3 13 P–Q5) and White has a slightly freer position.

(c) 9 B × N P × B 10 R × P B × N 11 Q × B (11 P × B? P–B4 is too weakening for White) 11 . . . N × P with complete equality.

One important feature of the Petroff which should be clear from these lines is that generally White has the option of leading the game into complex or very simple paths. Thus in some lines this defence looks like a vigorous counter-attacking weapon, while against other systems it looks like a very dull attempt to equalize. That, more than anything else, accounts for the relative unpopularity of this opening.

Two King's Gambits finish this section. The first is a brilliant anachronism, the second modern in both style and date.

WHITE: SMIRNOV BLACK: TIKHONOV
(Moscow, 1954)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 P–KB4 P × P 3 N–KB3 P–KN4 4 B–B4 P–N5 5 O–O P × N 6 Q × P

The Muzio Gambit. White obtains dangerous threats against KB7.

6 . . . Q–B3 7 P–K5 Q × P 8 B × P ch!?

Throwing another piece on the fire in order to expose the black king.

8 . . . K × B 9 P–Q4 Q × P ch 10 B–K3 Q–B3 11 B × BP B–N2?

After this move the defence is very difficult. 11 . . . N–K2 is better, though the attack is certainly still highly dangerous.

12 N–B3 N–K2 13 N–Q5! N × N 14 Q × N ch Q–K3 15 B–Q2 ch K–N1

This was intended to put an end to the onslaught, but Black has missed the nice finish:

16 QR–K1! Q × Q 17 R–K8 ch B–B1 18 B–R6! and **Black resigned.**

His extra queen, bishop and knight cannot help.

WHITE: ELEY BLACK: BOUWMEESTER
(England *v.* Holland, 1972)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 P–KB4 P × P 3 N–KB3 P–Q4

The modern approach to this old gambit.

4 P × P N–KB3 5 B–N5 ch P–B3 6 P × P N × P 7 P–Q4 B–Q3

By returning the pawn, Black has secured an easy development. Now the gambit pawn remains on KB4 to create problems for White.

8 Q–K2 ch?

The start of a greedy plan. 8 O–O O–O 9 QN–Q2 is better.

8 . . . B–K3 9 N–N5 O–O! 10 N × B P × N 11 Q × P ch K–R1 12 B × N P × B

White is now a pawn ahead, but the black pieces – and that pawn on White's KB4 – are all ready to launch an attack against his king.

13 O–O Q–B2 14 N–Q2 QR–K1 15 Q–B4 P–N4!

No need to worry about weakening the black king's position; White's development is too backward to take advantage of it.

16 N–B3 N–K5 17 R–K1 P–N5 18 N–K5

An unavailing attempt to block the lines of attack.

18 . . . B × N!

The tempting 18 . . . R × N? 19 P × R Q–N3 ch fails to 20 B–K3!

19 R × N B–Q3 20 R × R R × R 21 Q–B1 P–B6

Black finally plays this well-prepared breakthrough. All is soon over.

22 P × P P × P 23 Q × P Q–N2 ch! 24 Q–N2 R–K8 ch and White resigned.

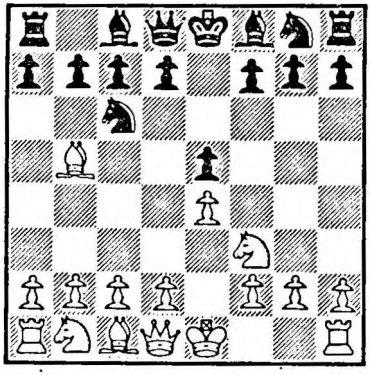
After 25 K–B2 R–K7 ch he loses his queen. A triumph for better development.

CHAPTER 4

Open Games III: The Ruy Lopez

The centuries of analysis and experience with openings discussed in earlier chapters reached a very important conclusion: White was trying for too much too soon. The Giuoco Piano, King's Gambit, Evans Gambit and the like all aimed for quick devastating attacks, which if defended correctly left the attacker with nothing. Gradually the realization dawned that the advantage of the first move really ought to be utilized to provide something lasting, not just a quickly dissipated initiative. The opening we discuss in this chapter is in keeping with this philosophy; Black is kept constrained, and White aims for strategic advantages which will last well into the middle game.

THE RUY LOPEZ:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5



This opening dates from the late fifteenth century, when it was mentioned in Lucena's work. Its name, however, comes from the Spanish priest who published analysis on it in 1561. Outside English-speaking countries it is called the 'Spanish Opening' which avoids the problem of ascribing credit to either of these venerable gentlemen.

The original idea of the Ruy Lopez was to increase the pressure on the black KP by attacking the knight defender. As we shall see, the threat to the KP is illusory, but a later White B × N is one of the problems Black must take into account when planning his development.

There are so many different variations and so much published analysis on the Ruy Lopez that it is easy to become totally bewildered by the complexity of possibilities even at the earliest stages. We shall therefore take the course of least confusion: first a trip along the main road to explain the principal ideas, then backtrack for tours of the side-streets of this labyrinth.

3 . . . P–QR3

The bishop can be a nuisance, so Black prepares to chase it away from its attack on his knight. The advance of Q-side pawns envisaged gains space, but also creates objects of attack. Alternatives, however, are more likely to leave Black with a lifeless position. We shall come to these later.

4 B–R4

4 B × N QP × B 5 N × P? lets Black regain the pawn with 5 . . . Q–Q5 when White has surrendered the bishop pair for nothing. There is, however, something to be said for capturing the knight. We look at its advantages later in the section on Exchange Variations.

4 . . . N–B3

Black resumes his development; he now has the option of playing . . . P–QN4 to expel the bishop, but that move is best delayed. 4 . . . P–QN4 5 B–N3 N–R4 6 O–O P–Q3 7 P–Q4

N × B 8 RP × N leaves a position where White's command of the centre and lead in development outweigh Black's possession of the bishop pair.

5 O–O

Since White plans to play a later P–QB3 and P–Q4, defending the KP with either 5 N–B3 or 5 P–Q3 would slow down his intentions. Castling is therefore the most natural move, relying on the potential pin on the K-file to regain the pawn after 5 . . . N × P. Also possible, though rarely seen, is 5 Q–K2, but keeping the queen on Q1 is a better way to support the future advance of the QP.

5 . . . B–K2

5 . . . N × P is the Open Defence, a sharp alternative to the sober main lines. We shall return to this later.

6 R–K1

Now the KP is firmly protected and, for the first time, White genuinely threatens 7 B × N followed by 8 N × P. Black must now chase the bishop away.

6 . . . P–QN4
7 B–N3 P–Q3

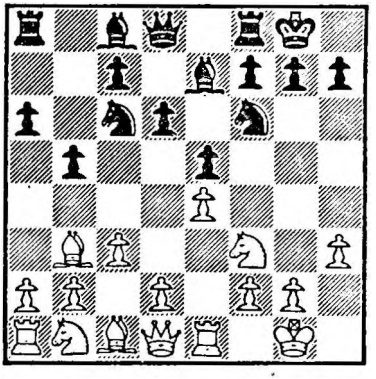
7 . . . O–O 8 P–B3 P–Q4 is the famous Marshall Countergambit. We devote a later section to its complications, and White's methods of avoiding it.

8 P–B3 O–O
9 P–KR3 (see diagram opposite)

This looks like a cowardly wasted move, but really for once it is worth while. White has quietly and effectively prepared his advance of P–Q4, but the immediate 9 P–Q4 B–N5 gives Black real pressure against the centre pawns. (We shall discuss that position later.) Therefore White plays just one more preparatory move, to ensure that the P–Q4 advance will be carried out without fear of molestation. By playing in this manner, White will have achieved his main opening objective: the

formation of a pawn centre on K4 and Q4, with Black's pawns restricted to K4 and Q3.

The diagram position is the starting-point for the many variations of the 'Closed Defence' to the Ruy Lopez. Before proceeding with the analysis we must consider what both sides are trying to do, and list some of the most important themes which run through all that follows.



White's principal ideas are based on utilizing his extra space gained by playing P–Q4. After this move he will develop his QN via Q2 and KB1, heading for K3 or KN3 from where it is usefully placed to attack the vulnerable white squares at Q5 and KB5. This knight manoeuvre can form the start of a K-side attack, aided by the other knight heading either for KN4 via KR2, or pointing also at KB5 from KR4. Black will often find the move . . . P–KN3 inevitable, to prevent invasion of his KB4, after which the white QB has increased scope.

Besides this plan of action on the K-side, White has another useful idea of play on the other wing. The move P–QR4 often comes in very useful, to create a vulnerable pawn at Black's QN4, then to tie the black pieces to its defence while White himself maintains control of the QR-file.

Black, on the other hand, also has things to do. His first concern is the centre, where White's advantage must be

contested. There are two main alternatives here. The first and older recipe is for Black to advance his QBP to B4 and put pressure on the white QP. Then he will have the option either of exchanging with ... BP × P and trying for play on the open QB-file, or of increasing the pressure against the QP to try to force White to exchange it himself or advance it. The other plan for Black is based on pressure against the white KP, by such moves as R–K1, B–KB1 and B–QN2. Now let us look at some precise variations.

CHIGORIN'S VARIATION: 9 ... N–QR4 10 B–B2 P–B4

Black gains space on the Q-side and prepares his attack against the pawn coming to Q4.

11 P–Q4 Q–B2

11 ... N–Q2 is the other way to guard the KP, but after 12 P × BP P × P 13 QN–Q2 the white knights are on their route to take advantage of the weakensses at Q5 and KB5. After the QN reaches K3, Black will have problems.

12 QN–Q2 N–B3

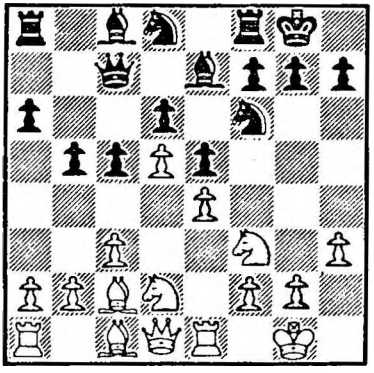
The main alternative is 12 ... BP × P 13 P × P N–B3 14 N–N3 P–QR4 15 B–K3 P–R5 16 QN–Q2 N–QN5 17 B–N1 B–Q2 18 P–R3 N–B3. Black has gained still more room on the Q-side, but White maintains his perfect centre despite all attempts to persuade him to advance or exchange the QP. For this reason the position remains easier for White.

13 P–Q5

13 P × BP P × P 14 N–B1 B–K3 15 N–K3 is the usual plan to take advantage of the beckoning central white squares. Black gains freedom in compensation for the weaknesses with 15 ... QR–Q1 16 Q–K2 P–B5 17 N–B5 KR–K1. The move 13 P–Q5 announces that White will play on his space advantage in a blocked position.

13 . . . N–Q1

13 . . . N–QR4 is less good; after 14 P–QN3! the knight is left stranded and finds it difficult to return to the game.

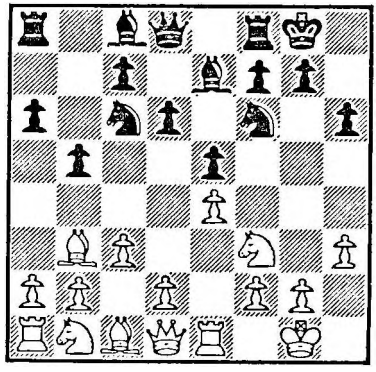


This is now a typical Lopez position, where White must find a plan. Most natural is to try to attack on the K-side, but 14 P–KN4? P–KR4! is more than satisfactory for Black, while 14 N–B1 N–K1 15 P–KN4 P–N3 16 B–R6 N–N2 17 N–N3 P–B3 18 K–R2 N–B2 also gets nowhere; the white attack has nothing to bite upon, and Black can even consider preparing major disruption with . . . P–B4. The most promising idea is to initiate some play on the other wing with 14 **P–QR4 R–N1** (14 . . . P–N5 15 N–B4 is beautiful for White) 15 **P–QN4** keeping the option of play on either wing.

SMYSLOV'S VARIATION:
9 . . . P–KR3

Another strange P–R3 move, but a very sophisticated idea in this position. Black intends . . . R–K1 and B–KB1 with a veiled attack on the white KP which may be increased with . . . B–QN2. In addition, the pawn at KR3 will form part of a solid defensive formation with . . . P–KN3 and B–KN2, which will restrict the white QB. Finally, with the rook on K1 Black

provides his own KP with a valuable added defender. The immediate 9 . . . R–K1? of course would have led to embarrassment after 10 N–N5.



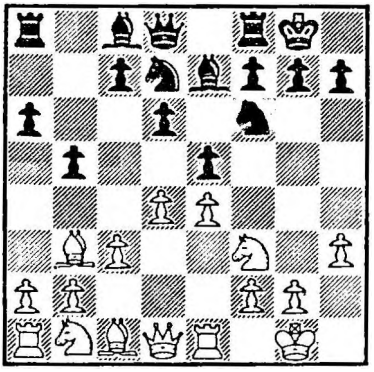
10 P–Q4 R–K1
11 QN–Q2 B–B1
12 N–B1

12 P–Q5 N–K2 gives Black a fine game, since he will be able to undermine the QP with . . . P–B3. The advance of the white QP is rarely correct when Black still has this possibility available.

12 . . . B–N2

This is the normal position for the Smyslov Defence. White still has his usual central advantage, but Black's development is easy and harmonious. There can follow 13 N–N3 N–QR4 14 B–B2 N–B5 (14 . . . P–B4 15 P–Q5 shuts knight and bishop out of the game) 15 P–N3 (15 P–QR4 P–Q4! is a typical counterthrust giving Black equality after the dust of complications settles) 15 . . . N–N3 16 P–QR4 P–B4 and Black stays active despite White's continued central occupation.

BREYER'S VARIATION:
9 . . . N–N1 10 P–Q4 QN–Q2



This is the oddest variation of all, and currently the most popular! Black spends two moves redeveloping a piece which already seemed to be satisfactorily placed. The idea, however, is well judged and perfectly in keeping with the position. We have already seen how this knight can cause Black problems: on QB3 it blocks the best diagonal of the QB, it is vulnerable to attack by P–Q5, it obstructs the advance of the QBP, and as often as not finds itself wandering out to QR4 and having to take a cumbersome path back into play. By redeploying it to Q2, Black intends to attack the white KP with B–N2, then strike in the centre with . . . P–QB4 or P–Q4.

11 QN–Q2

White also has two more violent moves which aim to punish Black for his time-wasting. Neither of them is very convincing: (a) 11 N–R4 aims for a quick K-side attack and challenges Black to grab a pawn with 11 . . . N × P. This leads to great complications after 12 N–B5 QN–B3 13 Q–B3 B–N2 14 B–B2. While Black seems able to survive that line, it is far safer to continue more quietly with 11 . . . N–N3, keeping the KB4 square covered. After 12 N–B5 (or 12 N–Q2 P–B4 with

active play) B × N 13 P × B P × P 14 P × P P–B4 Black's initiative makes it hard for White to make good use of his bishop pair.

(b) 11 P–B4 is best met by the solid 11 . . . P–B3. The critical continuation is then 12 P–B5!? Q–B2! 13 BP × P B × P 14 B–N5 P × P 15 B × N P × B 16 N × P N–B4. Black appears to have serious weaknesses in his king position, but his pieces become so active that White can take no advantage. After 17 N–B5 B × N 18 P × B QR–Q1 Black's position is even somewhat preferable.

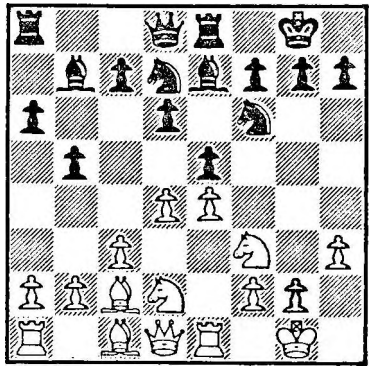
11 . . . B–N2

White may always pray for 11 . . . R–K1? when he wins by 12 B × P ch! K × B 13 N–N5 ch and 14 N–K6; but such prayers are never answered.

12 B–B2

The bishop must retreat to protect the KP, in order to free the knight for duties elsewhere. That White has to play this move helps justify Black's decision to omit . . . N–QR4 in favour of the Breyer regrouping plan.

12 . . . R–K1



This is the normal position arising from the Breyer Variation. Black has completed his development soundly and satisfactorily

and now intends to bring the bishop to KN2 via KB1, while playing pawns to KN3 and possibly KR3 to make White's attack difficult to play.

White has the choice, as so often in such Ruy Lopez positions, between initiating action on the K-side or on the other flank. Two typical continuations are as follows:

(a) 13 **P–QN4** B–KB1 14 P–QR4 P–QR4!? and Black fights against the attempt to secure a bind on the Q-side.

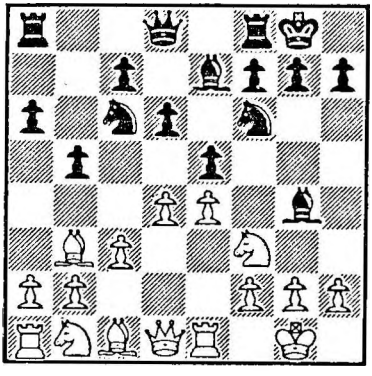
(b) 13 **N–B1** B–KB1 14 N–N3 P–N3 15 P–QR4 P–B4 16 P–Q5 P–B5 17 B–N5 P–R3 18 B–K3 N–B4 and Black's gain in space on the Q-side balances White's attacking chances on the other wing. This continuation is totally typical of a modern Ruy Lopez, handled well by both sides. The position we have reached in fact occurred twice in the Spassky–Portisch match of 1977 in the semi-final of the World Championship Candidates' series. These games resulted in one win each for White and Black. Spassky's win with White is a good example of how an attack may be generated against such an apparently solid formation. After the moves already given, there followed 19 Q–Q2 K–R2 20 N–R2 B–N2 21 R–KB1 (White prepares P–KB4) P–KR4?! 22 P–B3 (necessary to support the KP, but Black's KRP is now a target) 22 . . . Q–K2? (22 . . . Q–B2 was better, avoiding the pin which now comes) 23 B–N5! Q–B1 24 P–B4! P × BP 25 R × P KN–Q2 26 QR–KB1 N–K4 27 N × P! P × N 28 Q–K2 Q–R1 29 R–R4 K–N3 30 B–Q1! (now the KRP falls and White crashes through) 30 . . . P–B4 31 R × BP R–KB1 32 Q × P ch Q × Q 33 B × Q ch K–R2 34 B–B7 ch B–R3 35 R × B ch K–N2 36 B–B6 ch! K × B (36 . . . K × R 37 R–R5 mate) 37 B × N ch K–K1 38 R × R ch K × R 39 B × P ch K–N2 40 N–N4 and Black resigned.

That may have looked an easy victory, but note how Black contributed to his downfall by first weakening his K-side, then allowing his defending pieces to be drawn away. Despite such occasional setbacks the Breyer Variation remains one of the most solid and reliable defences to the Ruy Lopez.

That completes our discussion of the major possibilities after White's 9 P–KR3. We must now backtrack to look at some of the earlier possible divergences for both sides.

WHITE OMITS P–KR3:

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O B–K2 6 R–K1 P–QN4 7 B–N3 P–Q3 8 P–B3 O–O 9 P–Q4 B–N5



This is an important position which we must understand in order to appreciate the full significance of the normal 9 P–KR3. Without this preparatory move, Black has been allowed to pin the knight, thus making it more difficult for White to retain his ideal centre of pawns on K4 and Q4.

10 **B–K3**

After 10 P–Q5 N–QR4 11 B–B2 P–B3! Black disrupts the white centre; 12 P × P Q–B2! gives Black good control after capturing with the queen on QB3, while 12 P–KR3 may be met by 12 . . . B–B1 and the bishop emerges to a healthy new life on N2. The forcing 10 P–KR3 is also rather optimistic; after 10 . . . B × N 11 P × B (11 Q × B P × P does not give White enough for his pawn) 11 . . . N–QR4 12 B–B2 N–R4 and the white doubled pawns are a liability.

10 . . . P × P

10 . . . N × KP? 11 B–Q5 does not quite lose a piece for Black, but after 11 . . . Q–Q2! 12 B × KN P–Q4 13 B × P ch! K × B 14 P × P White is far better. 10 . . . P–Q4!? is a complicated alternative to the text, best met by 11 KP × P P × P 12 B × P N × B 13 P × N when White keeps some hope of an advantage from the opening.

The move 10 . . . P × P looks against all principles, giving up Black's strongpoint in the centre. The reason it is good here is that Black can thereby seize the initiative and increase his pressure against the white pawns at K4 and Q4.

11 P × P N–QR4

12 B–B2 P–B4

12 . . . N–B5 13 B–B1 P–B4 14 P–QN3 N–N3 is also not bad for Black. Note how the black knight finds its way to a better square by chasing White's bishops.

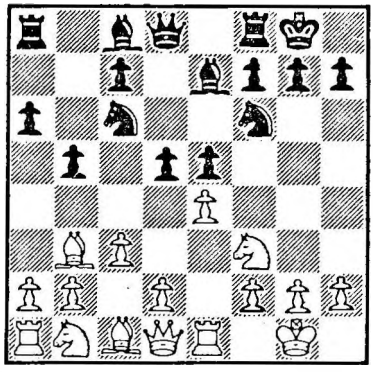
After 12 . . . P–B4 White can no longer keep his central advantage; 13 QN–Q2 P × P 14 B × P N–B3 15 B–K3 P–Q4 leads to complete equality, while 13 P × P P × P 14 QN–Q2, though a better try for advantage, also presents Black with a useful majority of pawns on the Q-side.

For most tastes, the lines with 9 P–Q4 lead to too fast a resolution of the tension. The sharp variations which result can certainly be dangerous for Black, but the continuations after 9 P–KR3 still look more likely to lead to a lasting advantage where Black has to work harder to equalize.

THE MARSHALL COUNTER-GAMBIT:

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O B–K2 6 R–K1 P–QN4 7 B–N3 O–O 8 P–B3 P–Q4 (see diagram overleaf)

This is one of Black's most violent possibilities against the Ruy Lopez. By surrendering a pawn he obtains a lasting initiative and an attacking position. Whole books have been



written, analysing this gambit, so what follows is a mere outline of the possibilities. Remember, however, that White can also avoid the gambit; we shall come to that later. First the complications:

9 P × P

White must eat the bait if he wants to profit. Instead, 9 P–Q4 P × QP 10 P–K5 N–K5 gives Black an easy game after either 11 P × P B–KN5 or 11 N × P N × KP! 12 P–B3 P–QB4.

9 . . . N × P

9 . . . P–K5 is tricky, but Black's initiative is dissipated quickly after accurate play: 10 P × N P × N 11 P–Q4! (development rather than wasting time with 11 Q × P B–KN5 12 Q–N3 R–K1 when Black indeed has a dangerous attack) 11 . . . P × P 12 B–N5 B–KN5 13 Q–Q3 R–K1 14 N–Q2 with clear advantage to White; his pieces are active, his king safe and the bold black KNP will only shield the monarch until it is captured.

10 N × P N × N

11 R × N P–QB3

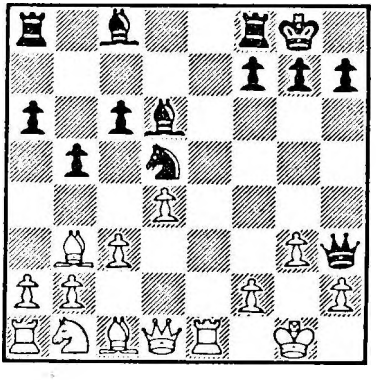
Marshall's original intention was 11 . . . N–B3 but 12 P–Q4 B–Q3 13 R–K1 N–N5 14 P–KR3 Q–R5 15 Q–B3! N × P!? 16 B–Q2! (not 16 Q × N B–R7 ch! 17 K–B1 B–N6 rather than 16 . . . B–N6? immediately, which allows 17 Q × P ch!)

and the black attack comes to a halt, leaving his pieces hopelessly overcommitted; 16 . . . N–N5 loses to 17 R–K8!

12 P–Q4

12 B × N P × B 13 P–Q4 B–Q3 14 R–K3 or 12 P–KN3 B–Q3 13 R–K1 N–B3 14 P–Q4 are two other possibilities to take some of the sting out of the Black attack, but the text move remains the most natural. White relies on developing his pieces to fight off the aggressor.

12 . . . B–Q3
13 R–K1 Q–R5
14 P–KN3 Q–R6

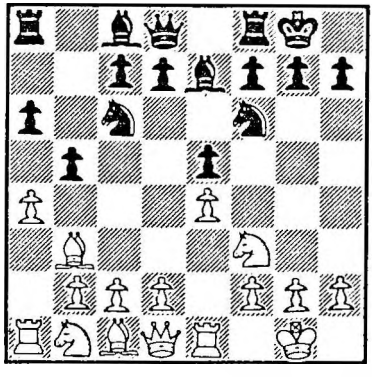


Black has succeeded in weakening the white squares around the enemy king. His attacking chances are clear, with such moves as B–KN5, QR–K1 and an advance of the KBP all imminent. White must be prepared to defend by bringing his queen via Q3 to KB1, while keeping the K-file blocked to prevent Black from penetrating. His own counterplay is based on undermining Black's hold on the Q-side with the moves P–QR4 and P–QB4. A typical continuation is 15 B–K3 B–KN5 16 Q–Q3 QR–K1 (the vigorous 16 . . . P–KB4 17 P–KB4 P–N4 is met by 18 Q–B1 Q–R4 19 N–Q2 QR–K1 20 Q–N2! when White too develops threats) 17 N–Q2 R–K3 18 P–R4 P–KB4

19 Q–B1 Q–R4 20 P–KB4 when it is still unclear whether Black's initiative is worth the pawn invested.

AVOIDING THE MARSHALL

After the moves 1 **P–K4 P–K4** 2 **N–KB3 N–QB3** 3 **B–N5 P–QR3** 4 **B–R4 N–B3** 5 **O–O B–K2** 6 **R–K1 P–QN4** 7 **B–N3 O–O** White has the opportunity to deny Black the chance of a Marshall Counter-gambit by refraining from the move 8 P–B3. One possibility is 8 P–Q4 P–Q3 9 P–B3 leading back to the sharp line already discussed on page 84. More important, however, is an attempt to take advantage of Black's omission of . . . P–Q3, by playing 8 **P–QR4.**



Note that this move would have far less force had Black played 7 . . . P–Q3 instead of 7 . . . O–O; in that case he has the reply 8 . . . B–N5 and the Q-side takes care of itself.

8 . . . **B–N2**

After 8 . . . R–N1 9 P × P P × P 10 P–B3 White is back in normal lines, with the additional bonus of an open line for his rook; this makes a Marshall-type sacrifice with 10 . . . P–Q4 extremely dubious. Possible, however, is 8 . . . P–N5, though after 9 P–Q4 P–Q3 White gains a slight edge with the simple 10 P × P (10 P–KR3 is also possible) 10 . . . P × P 11 QN–

Q2. The advance of the black QNP has given White the use of his QB4 square, which will be very useful to the knight.

9 P–Q3

With Black's bishop already on the long white diagonal, White does best to keep the centre closed. 9 P–B3 is already a mistake since Black obtains a tremendous attack after 9 . . . P–Q4! 10 P × QP N × P 11 N × P N × N 12 R × N N–B5.

9 . . . P–Q3

10 N–B3

10 B–Q2 is an alternative, keeping the black knight from QR4.

10 . . . N–QR4!

Black must play with vigour to avoid a passive game. 10 . . . P–N5 11 N–Q5 is very pleasant for White.

11 B–R2

11 P × P N × B 12 P × N P × P 13 R × R Q × R 14 N × NP R–N1 gives Black more than enough for his pawn; White has too many weak pawns himself.

11 . . . P–N5

12 N–K2 P–B4

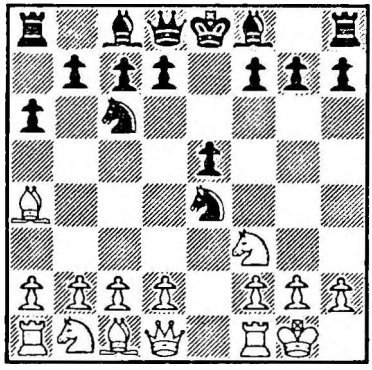
Chances are level. After 13 N–N3 Black can play 13 . . . P–N6!? when 14 P × P? N–B3 entombs the white bishop, while 14 B × P N × B 15 P × N P–QR4 also gives a firm blockade and chances of pressure on the QN–file worth the pawn invested.

THE OPEN DEFENCE:

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O N × P (see diagram overleaf)

This sharp continuation has always had a somewhat dubious reputation, despite its being favoured by World Champions Euwe and Tal and challenger Korchnoi. Black allows the K-file to become open and risks the resulting attack. In exchange he

obtains more freedom for his pieces than is usual on the black side of the Ruy Lopez.



6 P–Q4!

Regaining the pawn immediately with 6 R–K1 gives Black easy equality after 6 . . . N–B4 7 N × P B–K2 8 B × N QP × B.

6 . . . P–QN4

Black can hardly afford to grab the pawn: 6 . . . P × P 7 R–K1 P–Q4 (7 . . . P–B4 8 N × P gives White a tremendous attack) 8 N × P and now Black can only stay alive by resorting to the tactics of 8 . . . B–Q3! 9 N × N B × P ch 10 K–R1! Q–R5 but even after that White can force a better end-game with 11 R × N ch! P × R 12 Q–Q8 ch! Q × Q 13 N × Q ch K × N 14 K × B.

7 B–N3 P–Q4

Black stabilizes the position of his central knight, while blocking the white bishop's diagonal.

8 P × P

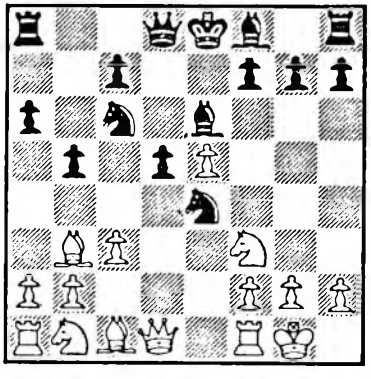
8 N × P N × N 9 P × N is far less energetic and leaves Black with a good game after 8 . . . P–QB3. Recapturing at once with the pawn leaves the black knight awkwardly placed in front of the backward QBP.

... B–K3
9 P–B3

This move plans to bring the bishop back into play at QB2 in order to put pressure on Black's knight. There are two interesting alternatives:

(a) 9 Q–K2 intends a major central disruption with R–Q1 and P–QB4. Black must develop quickly and ride the storm with 9 ... B–K2 10 R–Q1 O–O 11 P–B4 NP × P 12 B × P B–QB4! 13 B–K3 B × B 14 Q × B Q–N1! attacking the NP to distract from the pressure on his own QP; after 15 B–N3 N–R4 Black's position is satisfactory.

(b) 9 QN–Q2 threatens N × N followed by B × B, so Black must continue 9 ... N–B4 10 P–B3 P–Q5! (10 ... N × B 11 N × N favours White thanks to his control of the important black squares Q4 and QB5) and now 11 P × P N × QP gives equality, while the knight sacrifice 11 N–N5!? made famous by the tenth game of the 1978 Karpov–Korchnoi match, leads to complications still unresolved. A sample variation is 11 ... Q × N 12 Q–B3 K–Q2 (12 ... O–O–O!? is another complex possibility) 13 B–Q5 B × B 14 Q × B ch B–Q3 and 15 N–K4 Q × KP 16 N × N ch K–B1 is fine for Black, while 15 Q × P ch Q–K2 16 Q–B5 ch Q–K3 also gives White no more than a draw.

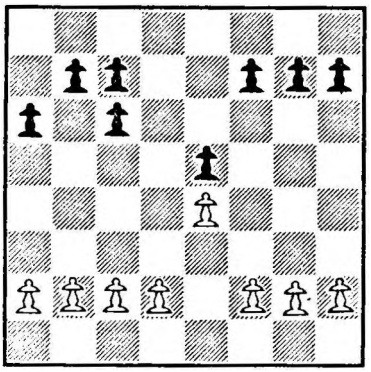


This is the normal position of the Open Defence. White's play is based on undermining the central black knight with moves such as B–B2, QN–Q2 and Q–K2, while also trying to control and utilize the squares Q4 and QB5. Black relies on active piece play and hopes for eventual mobilization of his Q-side pawns. Two typical continuations are as follows:
(a) 9 . . . **B–K2** 10 QN–Q2 (10 B–K3 first is also good) O–O 11 Q–K2 N–B4 12 N–Q4 and White has the initiative.
(b) 9 . . . **B–QB4** 10 QN–Q2 O–O 11 B–B2 B–B4 (neither 11 . . . N × KBP 12 R × N P–B3 13 P × P B × R ch 14 K × B Q × P 15 K–N1 nor 11 . . . P–B4 12 N–N3 B–N3 13 KN–Q4 is quite good enough for equality) 12 N–N3 B–KN5 13 P–KR3 B–R4 (13 . . . B × N 14 P × B wins a piece for White). Black remains active, but White can force a slightly favourable end-game with 14 P–N4 B–KN3 15 B × NP × B 16 N × BP × N 17 B–B4 Q × Q 18 QR × Q as in the fourteenth game of the 1978 Karpov–Korchnoi match. On the whole that match confirmed the view that the Open Defence, while playable, remains slightly inferior for Black.

EXCHANGE VARIATIONS

Having dealt with some of Black's most important options to avoid the main lines of the closed defence, we now come to one of White's most favoured alternatives. Systems in which White plays an early B × N are known generically as Exchange Variations. As we shall see, however, there are subtle differences according to the precise timing of the capture.

By giving up bishop for knight, White does a little damage to the black pawn structure. If we just look at the normal pawn configuration after Black has recaptured, as he usually does, with the QP, we can see some of the main ideas (see diagram opposite). The most important point to notice about this pawn structure is of prime importance for any end-game which may arise: by playing P–Q4 White may exchange QP for KP, leaving a position with clear pawn majorities on opposite wings.

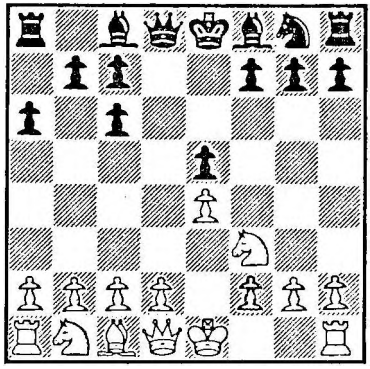


The White majority of pawns, however, is effective in that it can produce a passed pawn by force; Black's majority, on the other hand, cannot do so and may be held up by the three white pawns on the same wing. For that reason Black must beware of simple end-games which can arise from this type of position. In general he is best advised to hang on to his bishop pair and keep pieces on the board in active play rather than condescend to exchanges which might bring nearer the simple endings which White wants.

The other strategy which White may adopt is to avoid exchanges himself, at least for the time being, and strive to reach positions in which his knights are more effective than the black bishops. This may be done either in conjunction with the move P–Q4, in an open position, or in a more closed position with P–Q3. Now let us see how these ideas may be put into operation. First, the Exchange Variation proper:

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B × N QP × B (see diagram overleaf)

Capturing with the QP is Black's better choice. After 4 . . . NP × B 5 P–Q4 (or 5 O–O followed by 6 P–Q4) 5 . . . P × P 6 Q × P White has the advantage in the centre and the black pawns are ragged.



5 O–O

The old way to play this position was to encourage immediate exchanges with 5 P–Q4 P × P 6 Q × P Q × Q 7 N × Q, but experience showed that after 7 . . . B–Q2 followed by . . . O–O–O the black bishops can make life difficult for White despite his better pawn structure. The KB can be developed at N2, to exert pressure from afar against the centre and keep itself free from exchange.

5 . . . P–B3

Black must defend the KP, and this is the usual choice. 5 . . . B–Q3 6 P–Q4 P × P 7 Q × P leaves Black nothing better than 7 . . . P–B3 anyway. 5 . . . B–KN5 is aggressive but less logical in so far as it is likely to commit Black to exchange one of his bishops. After 6 P–KR3 P–KR4! 7 P–Q3 Q–B3 8 QN–Q2 White maintains chances of advantage.

6 P–Q4 P × P

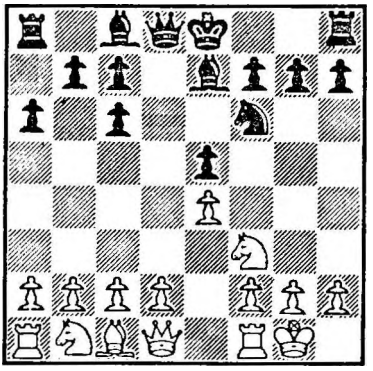
6 . . . B–KN5 is also possible here to put pressure on the white centre. After 7 P × P Q × Q 8 R × Q P × P 9 R–Q3 B × N 10 R × B N–B3 11 N–B3 B–N5 Black simplifies sufficiently to hold the ending. Another possible reply, however, is 7 P–B3 when 7 . . . P × P? (7 . . . B–Q3 is best) 8 P × P B × N 9 Q × B Q × P 10 R–Q1 is too dangerous for Black.

7 N × P P–QB4

Black forces the exchange of queens and again relies on his pair of bishops in the ending. After 8 N–N3 Q × Q 9 R × Q Black still has some problems to overcome, but should reach a satisfactory position.

DELAYED EXCHANGE SYSTEMS

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O B–K2 6 B × N QP × B



Apparently White has lost a move by first retreating the bishop then 'changing his mind' and capturing the knight after all. In compensation, however, he has given Black more problems in defending his KP. The knight prevents Black from playing . . . P–B3, while the bishop has already developed to K2 so would lose a move by going to Q3.

7 P–Q3

By defending his KP, White makes N × P a real threat.

7 . . . N–Q2

After 7 . . . B–Q3 Black finds his position too rigid; White can continue 8 QN–Q2 (8 P–Q4 is also worth thinking about) followed by 9 N–B4 with a more comfortable position. By

retreating the knight, Black prepares . . . P–B3 securing his central position.

8 **QN–Q2 O–O**
9 **N–B4 P–B3**

9 . . . B–B3 is again somewhat rigid. White continues with 10 P–QN3 and B–N2, then prepares P–KB4. After the text move the position is equal; White may try 10 P–Q4 P × P 11 N × P N–K4 or 10 N–R4 N–B4 11 N–B5 B × N 12 P × B Q–Q2 but Black's chances are no worse in either case.

OTHER WHITE ALTERNATIVES

After the moves 1 **P–K4 P–K4** 2 **N–KB3 N–QB3** 3 **B–N5 P–QR3** 4 **B–R4 N–B3** 5 **O–O B–K2** there are two other possibilities for White which we have not yet mentioned. Neither is particularly effective, so we summarize them here.

A: Central break with 6 **P–Q4**

By opening the position, White hopes to gain a quick initiative leading to an attack on the black king.

6 . . . **P × P**
7 **R–K1**

7 P–K5 N–K5 is easier for Black; after 8 N × P O–O 9 N–B5 P–Q4 he equalizes without difficulty.

7 . . . **O–O**
8 **P–K5 N–K1**

White has no good way to pursue his initiative. 9 N × P N × N 10 Q × N P–Q4 leaves Black in control, while the pawn sacrifice 9 P–B3 P × P 10 N × P P–Q3 is unconvincing. Probably best is 9 B–B4 P–QN4 10 B–N3 P–Q4 with equal chances.

B: 6 **Q–K2**

White defends the KP with his queen and frees the Q1 square

for the rook. The extra move taken, compared with leaving the queen on Q1 and playing R–K1, gives Black time for energetic counterplay:

6 . . . P–QN4
7 B–N3 O–O
8 P–B3 P–Q4!

Here the Marshall recipe is fully effective. After 9 P × P B–KN5! 10 P × N (or 10 P–KR3 B × N 11 Q × B P–K5 12 Q–K2 N–QR4 with a good game for Black) 10 . . . P–K5 11 P–Q4 P × N 12 P × P B–R4 Black has a dangerous attacking position. Therefore the safest course is for White to play 9 P–Q3 when after 9 . . . R–K1 Black has an easy game with level chances.

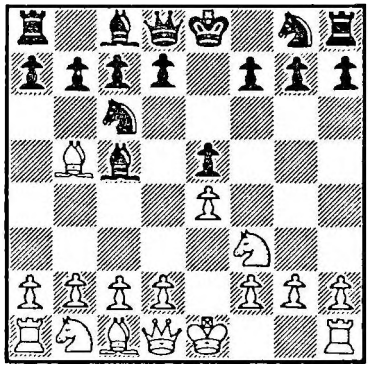
OTHER BLACK DEFENCES TO THE RUY LOPEZ

We have already encountered nearly all of the principal themes which may occur in this opening, yet there is still a bewildering complexity of variations left untouched. In order better to understand the ideas behind these less common variations, we shall group them according to their important features.

Black plays . . . B–QB4

In most lines we have seen, Black has been content to develop his KB to K2, behind the pawn on Q3. The apparently more active development to B4 has two drawbacks: the bishop is vulnerable to attack by the white advance P–Q4, and the knight on KB3 is more troubled by a pin on the Q1–KR5 diagonal. As we shall see, these two ideas dictate White's best plans against such systems. There are two such . . . B–B4 systems to consider.

A: The Classical Defence: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 B–B4



4 P–B3

The most natural move, preparing P–Q4 to embarrass the bold bishop. 4 O–O is also good, though Black can try 4 . . . N–Q5 to ease his game by exchanging knights.

4 . . . N–B3

After 4 . . . KN–K2 White retains the advantage with 5 O–O B–N3 6 P–Q4 P × P 7 P × P P–Q4 8 P × P N × P 9 R–K1 ch B–K3 10 B–N5 Q–Q3 11 QN–Q2. Opening the position so early is always dangerous for Black.

4 . . . P–B4 is another over-bold try; White gains advantage most simply with 5 P–Q4 P × KP 6 P × B P × N 7 Q × P N–B3 8 O–O O–O 9 B–N5; White's bishops are useful in such an open position.

5 O–O O–O

6 P–Q4 B–N3

7 B–N5

This pinning move gives White the advantage. After 7 . . . P–KR3 8 B–KR4 P–Q3 9 P–R4 P–QR4 10 R–K1 Black has trouble freeing his position. The move . . . P–KN4 is always likely to encourage a winning sacrifice with N × NP.

B: The Arkhangelsk Variation

This romantic name is given to a related system in which Black delays the development of the bishop for some time:

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 N–B3 5 O–O P–QN4 6 B–N3 B–N2 meeting **7 R–K1** with **7 . . . B–B4.**

White treats this in similar fashion with 8 P–B3 P–Q3 9 P–Q4 B–N3 10 B–N5 P–R3 11 B–KR4 O–O 12 P–R4 with the better game for White. Note, however, the very trappy line after 8 P–B3 N–KN5 9 P–Q4 P × P when White must play 10 P–KR3! with clear advantage rather than 10 P × P? N × QP! 11 N × N Q–R5 winning for Black after 12 N–B3 Q × BP ch 13 K–R1 Q–N8 ch! and mate next move.

Systems with . . . P–Q3

As we have seen, the move . . . P–QN4 can sometimes turn out to give White a target on the Q-side. There are some rather unambitious defences for Black which aim to adopt a solid position with . . . P–Q3 holding the centre and avoiding any weaknesses. The free hand given to White in the centre in such lines is usually enough for him to gain the advantage.

The Steinitz Defence:
1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–Q3

White should react to this somewhat passive move by taking the centre:

4 P–Q4 B–Q2

4 . . . P × P cedes central ground and gives White the pleasant choice between 5 N × P and 5 Q × P B–Q2 6 B × N B × B 7 N–B3 with advantage in either case.

5 N–B3 N–B3

6 O–O

6 B × N B × B 7 P × P N × P gives nothing, but 7 Q–Q3! is an improvement, forcing Black to surrender space with 7 . . . P × P.

6 . . . B–K2

Since Black cannot hold his central ground in any case, 6 . . . P × P 7 N × P B–K2 is sometimes played here, but White is certainly better thanks to his advantage in central space.

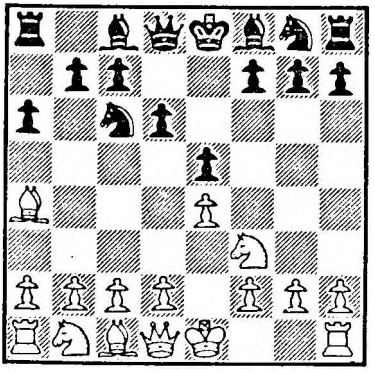
White's play is now based on inducing Black to give up his central hold by playing . . . P × P. This may be done either by 7 B × N B × B 8 Q–Q3 P × P 9 N × P or by 7 R–K1 when again there is nothing better than 7 . . . P × P. Instead, 7 . . . O–O? allows 8 B × N B × B 9 P × P P × P 10 Q × Q QR × Q 11 N × P B × P 12 N × B N × N 13 N–Q3! P–KB4 14 P–KB3 B–B4 ch 15 N × B N × N 16 B–N5 R–Q4 17 B–K7 and White wins material thanks to the additional threat of P–QB4. This is the famous trap of Tarrasch–Marco, Dresden, 1892. Note that if Black had recaptured with the KR at move 10, simply 15 K–B1 would have won a piece.

The Steinitz Defence Deferred: 1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B–R4 P–Q3 (see diagram opposite)

This is an attempt to improve on the Steinitz Defence since 5 P–Q4 may now be met by 5 . . . P–QN4 6 B–N3 N × P 7 N × N P × N and now 8 Q × P?? loses a piece to 8 . . . P–QB4 9 Q–Q5 B–K3 10 Q–B6 ch B–Q2 11 Q–Q5 P–B5. This is the Noah's Ark Trap.

5 O–O

5 B × N ch P × B 6 P–Q4 is another good way to play. Black's pawns are a little scruffy but his bishops can become active after 6 . . . P × P (6 . . . P–B3 is the solid alternative) 7 N × P P–QB4. Also popular is 5 P–B3 when 5 . . . P–B4 (the Siesta Variation) is a complex reply.



5 . . . B–Q2

5 . . . B–N5 6 P–KR3 P–KR4 used to be recommended for Black, but after 7 P–B4 Q–B3 8 Q–N3 O–O–O 9 B × N P × B 10 N–R2! White avoids the traps and emerges with the advantage.

6 P–B3 N–B3
7 P–Q4

Now 7 . . . N × KP is too dangerous for Black: 8 R–K1 P–B4 (or 8 . . . N–B3 9 B × N B × B 10 P × P P × P 11 Q × Q ch R × Q 12 N × P B–K5 13 N–Q2 with advantage) 9 P × P P × P 10 QN–Q2! N × N 11 N × P! with advantage to White. Therefore Black must be content with 7 . . . B–K2 or 7 . . . P–KN3 leaving White slightly better in either case thanks to his superior pawn centre.

The Schliemann (or Jaenisch) Gambit: 3 . . . P–B4

This outlandish move attempts to throw the game out of its normal strategic channels. It is dangerous, but not considered totally correct.

4 N–B3

4 P–Q3 is a safe alternative which also gives chances of advantage; White develops quickly and quietly in the hope that the advance of the black KBP will prove weakening. Note, however, that 4 P–Q4?! commits White to dubious sacrifices himself after 4 . . . BP × P 5 N × P N × N 6 P × N P–B3 since retreating the bishop loses the KP to . . . Q–R4 ch. Also good for Black is 4 P × P P–K5.

4 . . . P × P

Against other moves White plays 5 P × P.

5 QN × PP–Q4

6 N × P

6 N–KN3 is a more peaceful alternative, but Black should be able to equalize after 6 . . . B–KN5 7 P–KR3 B × N 8 Q × B N–B3.

6 . . . P × N

7 N × N

This very wild position seems to be in White's favour. Some examples of the characteristic complications:

(a) 7 . . . P × N 8 B × P ch B–Q2 9 Q–R5 ch! K–K2 10 Q–K5 ch B–K3 11 B × R Q × B 12 Q × BP ch.

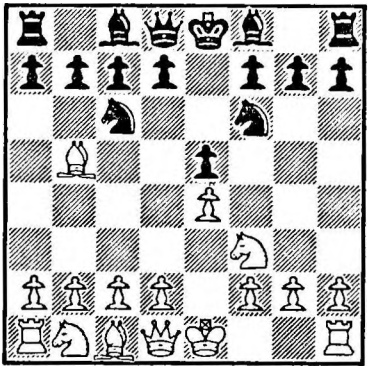
(b) 7 . . . Q–Q4 8 P–QB4 Q–Q3 9 N × P ch B–Q2 10 B × B ch Q × B 11 Q–R5 ch P–KN3 12 Q–K5 ch K–B2 13 N–N5 P–B3 14 Q–Q4!

(c) 7 . . . Q–N4 8 Q–K2 N–B3 (8 . . . Q × NP is met by 9 Q–R5 ch) 9 P–KB4! Q–R5 ch (better than 9 . . . Q × BP 10 N–K5 ch) 10 P–KN3 Q–R6 11 N–K5 ch P–B3 12 B–B4 and White's attack should be better than Black's.

Before leaving the Schliemann Gambit, we should mention its close relative the Schliemann Deferred, introduced by the moves 3 . . . P–QR3 4 B–R4 P–KB4. That is even more dubious, for although 5 N–B3 is now well met by 5 . . . P–QN4 6 B–N3 P–N5! Black no longer has the old resource against 5 P–Q4! and must enter the hazardous world of 5 . . . KP × P 6 P–K5!

The Berlin Defence: 3 . . . N–B3

This is another sound developing line, but like the Steinitz Defence rather too passive for most modern tastes.



4 0–0 N × P

4 . . . P–Q3 leads to Steinitz Defence-type positions, while 4 . . . B–B4 gives the Classical Defence. Capturing the KP is what gives the Berlin its individual flavour.

5 P–Q4 B–K2

5 . . . N–Q3 6 B × N (6 P × P N × B 7 P–QR4 is also possible) QP × B 7 P × P N–B4 8 Q × Q ch gives White an edge in the end-game.

6 Q–K2

This seems strongest, attacking the knight while it can still not retreat to B4. After 6 . . . N–Q3 7 B × N NP × B (7 . . . QP × B 8 P × P N–B4 9 R–Q1 is good for White) 8 P × P N–N2 9 P–B4 O–O 10 N–B3 N–B4 White's extra space gives him the preferable position.

Finally we must give a brief mention to **Bird's Defence,** 3 . . . N–Q5, simplest met by 4 N × N P × N 5 O–O P–QB3 6 B–B4 N–B3 7 R–K1 P–Q3 8 P–Q3 B–K2 9 N–Q2; and **Cozio's Defence,** 3 . . . KN–K2, met by 4 O–O followed,

usual, by P–QB3 and P–Q4. In these and other unusual defences, the normal principles of development and central control can be relied upon to convey some advantage on White.

We end with a couple of Exchange Variation games; the first is a triumph for the white pawn majority and knights, the second a victory for the black bishops.

WHITE: LASKER BLACK: CAPABLANCA
(St Petersburg, 1914)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B × N QP × B 5 P–Q4 P × P 6 Q × P Q × Q 7 N × Q B–Q3
Not a very effective place for this bishop whose development is better delayed until White has committed his pieces more.

8 N–QB3 N–K2 9 O–O O–O 10 P–B4 R–K1
10 . . . B–QB4 11 B–K3 R–K1 was better, when White has difficulties dealing with the threat of . . . N–Q4.

11 N–N3 P–B3 12 P–B5!
'When your opponent has the bishop pair, you should try to exchange one of them', said Nimzowitsch. White intends B–B4 after which his control of K6 is more important than the loss of the K5 square.

12 . . . P–QN3
Too passive. 12 . . . P–KN4!? energetically counters White's plans since 13 P × P e.p. N × P 14 R × P B–K4 and 15 . . . B × N is fine for Black.

13 B–B4 B–N2 14 B × B P × B 15 N–Q4 QR–Q1 16 N–K6 R–Q2 17 QR–Q1 N–B1 18 R–B2 P–QN4 19 KR–Q2 QR–K2 20 P–QN4!
This move seals the Q-side and leaves White free to begin action on the other wing. Black's best chance here is to give up the exchange now or next move with . . . R × N. Instead he relies on passive defence.

20 . . . K–B2 21 P–QR3 B–R1 22 K–B2 R–R2 23 P–N4! P–R3 24 R–Q3 P–QR4 25 P–KR4 P × P 26 P × P QR–K2 27 K–B3 R–N1 28 K–B4 P–N3

Rather than wait for White to prepare P–KN5, Black tries to fight back.

29 R–N3 P–N4 ch 30 K–B3! N–N3

30 . . . P × P 31 R–R3 is even worse for Black.

31 P × P! RP × P 32 R–R3!

Keeping Black stifled rather than allowing him freedom after 32 R × P N–B5 33 R–Q1 R–R1.

32 . . . R–Q2 33 K–N3 K–K1 34 QR–KR1 B–N2 35 P–K5!

A fine combination with the backward pawn leading the attack.

32 . . . QP × P 36 N–K4 N–Q4 37 N(K6)–B5! B–B1

Material had to be lost: 37 . . . R–QB2 38 N × B with N–Q6 ch to follow.

38 N × R B × N 39 R–R7 R–B1 40 R–R1 K–Q1 41 R–R8 ch B–B1 42 N–B5 Resigns.

WHITE: VERLINSKY BLACK: ALEKHINE
(St Petersburg, 1909)

1 P–K4 P–K4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5 P–QR3 4 B × N QP × B 5 P–Q4 P × P 6 Q × P Q × Q 7 N × Q P–QB4 8 N–K2 B–Q2 9 P–QN3?

The idea of B–N2 is not bad, but this is a bad pawn move allowing a sacrifice which gives the black bishops a dominating role.

9 . . . P–B5! 10 P × P B–R5 11 P–QB3 O–O–O 12 N–Q2 B–B7 13 P–B3 B–B4 14 P–QR4

14 N–Q4 would have lost at once to 14 . . . R × N! 15 P × R B × QP.

14 . . . N–B3 15 B–R3 B–K6 16 N–KB1 B–R2 17 P–R5 R–Q6 18 P–B5 KR–Q1 19 K–B2 N–Q2 20 N–K3 N × P!

Bringing the bishop back to life with devastating effect. 21

N × B allows mate in five with 21 . . . N × P ch 22 K–K1 R–Q8 ch! 23 R × R B–B7 ch etc.

21 **N–Q4 B–N6** 22 **K–K2 R × P** 23 **B–N2 R × N ch!** 24 **K × R N–K3** 25 **R–R3 N × N** 26 **K–B4 B–B4** 27 **QR–R1 N–K7 ch** 28 **K–N4 B–K3 ch** and **White resigned.**

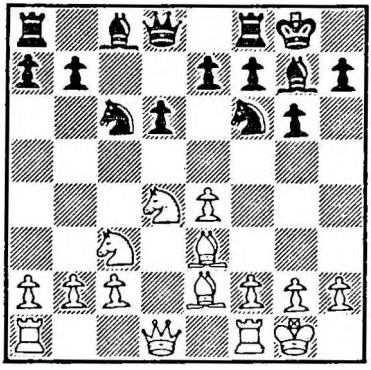
CHAPTER 5

Half-Open Games I: The Sicilian Defence

After 1 P–K4, Black has, of course, many possibilities other than the symmetrical 1 . . . P–K4. These are known as the half-open (or semi-open) defences. The most popular of these is the Sicilian Defence 1 . . . P–QB4, which forms the subject of this chapter.

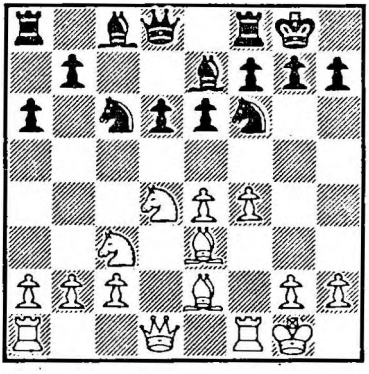
After 1 **P–K4 P–QB4** White is prevented from occupying the centre with 2 P–Q4 (since 2 . . . P × P 3 Q × P N–QB3 would lose time). The most common continuation, therefore, is to prepare P–Q4 with 2 **N–KB3**. (We shall return later to other second-move possibilities.) After 2 . . . **P–K3**, 2 . . . **P–Q3** or 2 . . . **N–QB3**, White continues 3 **P–Q4 P** × **P** 4 **N** × **P** reaching a position with certain features in common with the Scotch Game, but with the very important difference that Black is far less well placed to bring out his pieces quickly; 1 . . . P–K4 contributes to development far more than does 1 . . . P–QB4. White's advantage in space must thus, for the time being, go unchallenged. Black's compensation lies in his centre pawns and their potential for controlling the important squares.

Black's play from move 2 onwards must be dictated by his desired development plan. The three diagrams which follow indicate the basic options open to him. First we see the 'Dragon' formation (see diagram overleaf).



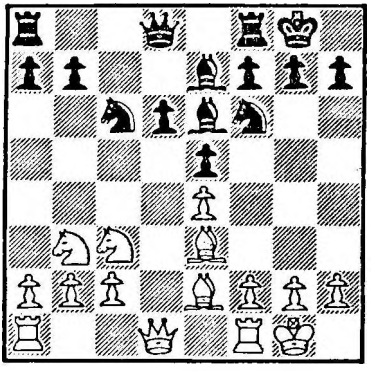
The bishop on the long black diagonal is the key to this development system. Black hopes to combine its action with play on the QB-file and an advance of the QR- and QN-pawns.

Next we see the Scheveningen formation:



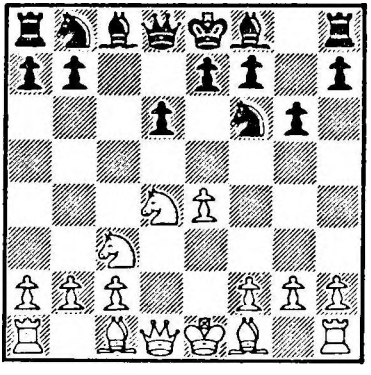
The pawns on K3 and Q3 provide a central barrier making it difficult for White to advance beyond his half of the board. Black hopes to expand on the Q-side with . . . P–QN4 and may later undertake central action with . . . P–K4 or . . . P–Q4.

Finally, the Boleslavsky formation (see diagram opposite).



The black KP anchors his centre; the QP is left backward, but black pieces control the important Q4 square. At the cost of a slight defect in pawn structure, Black obtains free play for his pieces and contests White's advantage in space.

THE DRAGON AND RELATED SYSTEMS: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–Q3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–KN3



Black's simple and natural development plan is responsible for the great popularity of the Dragon Variation, though in practice, at the highest levels of play, many dragons are slain by quick

White attacks. In the main line, the so-called 'Yugoslav Attack', White develops with B–K3, P–KB3, Q–Q2, B–QB4 and O–O–O before launching an attack with the KR and KN pawns. Before that, however, let us look at some of the quieter alternatives.

A: 6 **P–B4** is the Levenfish Variation, incorporating a trap: 6 . . . B–N2 7 P–K5 P × P (7 . . . N–R4! is better; 8 P–KN4? is met by 8 . . . N × P) 8 P × P N–N5 (8 . . . KN–Q2 9 P–K6 is also good for White) 9 B–N5 ch N–B3 (9 . . . B–Q2? 10 Q × N or 9 . . . K–B1 10 N–K6 ch both lose immediately for Black) 10 N × N Q × Q ch 11 K × Q and Black is struggling. To avoid this Black usually plays 6 **. . . N–B3** (6 . . . QN–Q2 is also possible) 7 **N × N** (7 B–N5 B–Q2 8 B × N B × B gives White no advantage) 7 . . . P × N 8 P–K5 N–Q2 9 P × P P × P 10 B–K3 B–K2 11 Q–B3 P–Q4 and Black obtains a good position. The straggling black centre pawns must be handled carefully in this line, but they are still a potential force in the middle game.

B: 6 **B–K2** introduces a comparatively quiet line with White castling short: 6 **. . . B–N2** 7 **B–K3 N–B3** 8 **O–O O–O** 9 **N–N3** (9 P–B4 Q–N3! favours Black; 10 Q–Q3 is met by 10 . . . N–KN5 11 N–Q5 B × N 12 N × Q B × B ch 13 K–R1 B × N) 9 **. . . B–K3** 10 **P–B4 Q–B1** with equal chances; Black prevents P–KN4 or P–KB5 while himself preparing central action with R–Q1 and P–Q4.

C: 6 **P–KN3** is another quiet system; White develops his bishop on the long diagonal to prevent Black's P–Q4 while also adding to the defence of the white KP and envisaging a later N–Q5. After 6 **. . . N–B3** 7 **N(Q4)–K2** (7 B–N2 N × N 8 Q × N B–N2 gives Black an easy game) Black can either develop normally with 7 . . . B–N2 8 B–N2 O–O 9 O–O R–N1 intending an advance of the Q-side pawns or try something more vigorous with 7 . . . P–KR4!? 8 P–KR3 B–Q2 9 B–N2 Q–B1.

Let us now revert to the main line:

6 B–K3 B–N2

6 . . . N–N5? is a blunder, losing material after 7 B–N5 ch!

7 P–B3

This move is already advisable; 7 Q–Q2 N–N5 favours Black, while 7 B–QB4 is also met by 7 . . . N–N5 since 8 B–N5 ch K–B1! causes White more discomfort than Black.

7 . . . N–B3
8 Q–Q2 O–O
9 B–QB4

The immediate 9 O–O–O is an interesting alternative, giving Black more chances of counterplay on the diagonal leading to White's QR2. Two sharp possibilities are worth mentioning:
(a) 9 . . . P–Q4!? 10 P × P N × P 11 N × N P × N and now 12 B–Q4! P–K4 13 B–B5 B–K3! 14 N–K4! (14 B × R Q × B gives Black a powerful attack) is better than grabbing a pawn with 12 N × N P × N 13 Q × P Q–B2! (and if 14 Q × R then 14 . . . B–B4) when Black has good attacking chances along the open lines.
(b) 9 . . . N × N 10 B × N B–K3 is the most logical continuation, taking the diagonal which White refused by omitting 9 B–QB4; there can follow:
(b1) 11 K–N1 Q–B2 (not 11 . . . Q–R4? 12 N–Q5!) 12 P–KN4 KR–B1 13 P–KR4 Q–R4 and Black has good counterplay. 14 N–Q5 no longer works since B1 is free for the black king. The game Ostermeyer–Sosonko, Mannheim, 1975, is a good example of Black's possibilities: 14 P–R3 (to prevent . . . R × N!) 14 . . . QR–N1 15 P–R5 P–QN4 16 P–R6 B–R1 17 B × N B × B 18 N–Q5 P–N5! (18 . . . Q × Q 19 N × B ch favours White since Black no longer has the move . . . K–N2 and must weaken his pawns) 19 P × P? Q–R5 20 P–QN5 B × N 21 P × B P–R3! and White resigned; there is no defence to the mating attack along the QR- or QN-file;
(b2) 11 N–Q5! B × N 12 P × B Q–B2 13 P–KN4 QR–B1

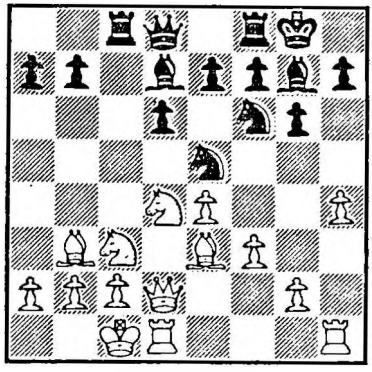
14 P–B3 Q–R4 15 P–N5 N–R4 16 B × B N × B and Black maintains an active position.

9 . . . B–Q2

Experience has shown that Black does best to play for an attack. Simplification with 9 . . . N × N 10 B × N B–K3 11 B–N3! is in White's favour. After 11 . . . Q–R4 12 O–O–O P–QN4 13 K–N1 KR–B1 14 KR–K1 B × B 15 BP × B P–N5 16 B × N P × N 17 B × P B × B 18 P × B Black has great difficulty in holding the resulting end-games.

10 O–O–O R–B1
11 B–N3 N–K4
12 P–KR4

White must be very careful about possible sacrifices of the exchange on QB3. After 12 B–R6 B × B 13 Q × B R × N! 14 P × R P–R4 Black has a very dangerous initiative. White's attack must be a little more advanced before he is ready to let his queen stray from its good defensive post.

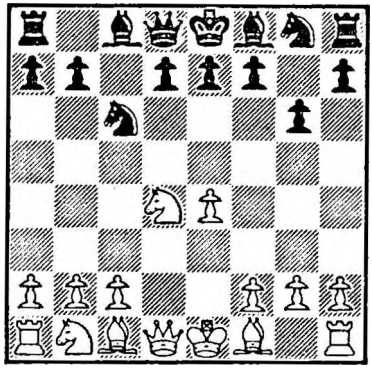


After 12 P–KR4 the position becomes very sharp, and although theory has always favoured White's chances, brilliant Black wins are not uncommon. Play can continue:
(a) 12 . . . N–B5 13 B × N R × B 14 P–R5 (14 P–KN4 is also possible) 14 . . . N × RP 15 P–KN4 N–B3 16 N(Q4)–K2 and now Black must play 16 . . . R–K1! rather than the 16 . . .

Q–R4 of Karpov–Korchnoi, second match game, 1974, which concluded 17 B–R6 B × B 18 Q × B KR–B1 19 R–Q3! R(B5)–B4 20 P–N5! R × P 21 R–Q5! R × R 22 N × R R–K1 23 N(K2)–B4! B–B3 24 P–K5! B × N 25 P × N P × P 26 Q × RP ch K–B1 27 Q–R8 ch resigns; a typical piece of dragon-slaying.

(b) 12 . . . P–KR4 holds up the attack temporarily, but after 13 B–N5 White has very dangerous possibilities of P–KN4 followed by B × N and P–KR5.

THE ACCELERATED FIANCHETTO: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P P–KN3



By omitting the move . . . P–Q3, Black hopes to gain time for counterplay and prevent White from adopting his most aggressive anti-Dragon systems. The following examples give some indication of the possibilities:

(a) 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 B–K2 O–O 8 O–O P–Q4! with fine play for Black.

(b) 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 P–B3 O–O 8 B–QB4 Q–N3! 9 B–N3 N–KN5 with advantage to Black.

(c) 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 N × N NP × N

8 P–K5 is a more serious test, but after 8 . . . N–N1 9 B–Q4 P–B3 Black obtains enough play in the centre.

(d) 5 N–QB3 B–N2 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 B–QB4 is the only way White can attempt to set up an anti-Dragon attack, but Black has the choice between 7 . . . O–O 8 B–N3 P–Q3 9 P–B3 B–Q2 10 Q–Q2 N × N 11 B × N P–QN4, and 7 . . . Q–R4 8 O–O (8 P–B3? is met by 8 . . . Q–N5!) 8 . . . O–O 9 B–N3 P–Q3 and in neither case has White been able to obtain as promising an attacking position as desired.

All seems fine for Black so far, but the drawback of the system is revealed in the main line; White's knight has not been forced to QB3 so his QBP is unimpeded.

5 P–QB4

This is the Maroczy Bind, named after the Hungarian grandmaster who showed that the spatial advantage gained by this move can be a valuable asset.

5 . . . N–B3

5 . . . B–N2 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 N–QB3 N–KN5!? 8 Q × N N × N 9 Q–Q1 N–K3 is another way to play, but after 10 R–B1 P–Q3 11 P–QN4 White's control of the board threatens to grow even larger and squash Black completely. 5 . . . B–N2 6 B–K3 N–R3 is motivated by the desire to disrupt the centre with . . . P–KB4, but after 7 B–K2 (7 N–B3 O–O 8 B–K2 P–B4 9 P × P B × N 10 B × N! is also good) 7 . . . P–Q3 8 Q–Q2 Black must play 8 . . . N–KN5 9 B × N B × B when 10 N–QB3 leaves it still difficult for him to create any counterplay.

6 N–QB3 N × N
7 Q × N P–Q3

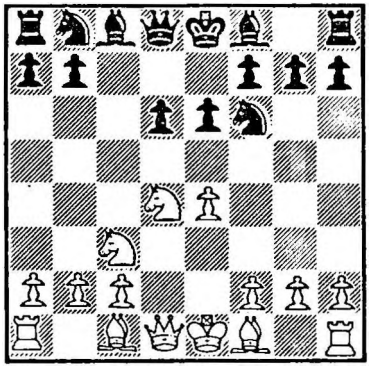
White's grip on the central squares gives him the advantage. There can follow 8 B–K2 B–N2 9 B–N5 O–O 10 Q–Q2 B–K3 11 R–QB1! (avoiding Black's counterplay after 11 O–O R–B1 12 P–QN3 P–N4!) 11 . . . Q–R4 12 P–B3 KR–B1 13 P–QN3 and Black has great difficulty in freeing his position;

he must always be wary of White's N–Q5 which can easily lead to a highly advantageous end-game.

THE SCHEVENINGEN AND RELATED SYSTEMS

Totally different from the Dragon Variation are those systems where Black develops his bishop on K2 instead of KN2. There are numerous different black move orders which can reach the same sort of position, each with its own independent features. We shall discuss first the Classical Scheveningen Variation, and then look at the merits and disadvantages of the various alternative routes.

The Classical Scheveningen: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–K3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–Q3



6 B–K2

This quiet developing move is only one of many possibilities. Other ideas are as follows:

(a) 6 P–KN4!? is the most dangerous move for Black; after 6 . . . P–KR3 (6 . . . P–QR3 7 P–N5 N–Q2 8 B–K3 P–QN4

also leads to very sharp play) 7 B–N2 N–B3 8 P–KR3 B–Q2 9 B–K3 P–R3 Black has prospects of Q-side counterplay.
(b) 6 B–K3 P–QR3 7 P–B4 P–QN4 8 P–QR3 B–N2 9 B–Q3 QN–Q2 10 Q–B3 R–B1 and Black has an active game with the ever-present threat of an exchange sacrifice *à la* Dragon on QB6. Note how Black's early move order preserves the option of developing the knight at Q2 or QB3 in this variation. That is a theme to which we shall return.
(c) 6 P–KN3 B–K2 7 B–N2 O–O 8 O–O P–QR3 9 P–B4 Q–B2 10 P–KN4 is an example of delayed aggression; Black counters satisfactorily with 10 . . . N–B3! 11 N × N P × N 12 P–N5 N–K1 and the White attack is going nowhere; after 13 P–B5 P × P 14 P × P P–Q4! Black has few problems. In general the move P–KN4 is effective only when the black knight is already developed to Q2; with the knight on QB3, Black has greater possibilities of counterplay in the centre.

6 . . . **B–K2**
7 **P–B4 O–O**
8 **O–O P–QR3**

This is a preparation for . . . P–QN4, which is a basic part of Black's Q-side counterplay. Black can also play without this move with 8 . . . N–B3 9 B–K3 B–Q2 when 10 Q–K1 is met by 10 . . . N × N 11 B × N B–B3 with active play. For this reason White usually avoids the exchange of knights by playing 10 N–N3 after which the bishop on Q2 is not so happily placed.

9 **B–K3 Q–B2**

After 9 . . . P–QN4 10 B–B3 is embarrassing for Black since White's P–K5 will open an attack on the rook. The queen move is the most flexible here, though 9 . . . N–B3 is also good; after 10 Q–K1 B–Q2 Black is ready for counterplay with . . . P–QN4.

10 **K–R1**

This useful waiting move asks where Black intends to put his QN. After 10 Q–K1 it is possible for Black to play 10 . . . P–QN4 11 B–B3 B–N2 12 P–K5 P × P 13 P × P KN–Q2

14 Q–N3 K–R1 and Black's pressure against the KP makes it hard for White to pursue his attacking ambitions. Both 10 P–QR4 and 10 P–KN4 are premature since Black can play 10 . . . N–B3 in either case; both are good options when Black has already played . . . QN–Q2 but, with the knight on B3, neither has the desired cramping effect.

10 . . . N–B3

10 . . . P–QN4 is more dubious here; White can play 11 B–B3 B–N2 12 P–K5 P × P 13 P × P KN–Q2 14 B × B Q × B 15 Q–R5 with better attacking chances than in the similar line given in the previous note.

11 Q–K1

The normal attacking plan; White brings his queen to KN3 in order to prepare the advance of the KP.

11 . . . N × N
12 B × N P–QN4

A normal Scheveningen position; White hopes to build a powerful attack against the black king with such moves as Q–N3, B–Q3 and P–K5, while Black will develop with . . . B–N2 keeping pressure against the KP and maintaining a Q-side initiative. As in the Dragon Variation, the white attack does better in practice, though theory maintains the solidity of the black side.

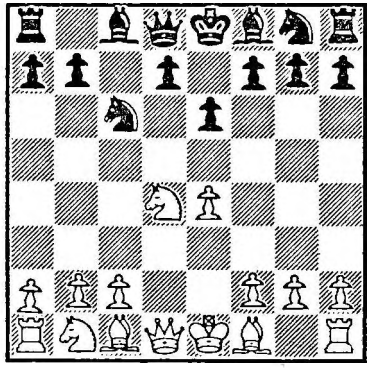
Two further variations must be mentioned here which have much in common with the Scheveningen. Both involve attempts to inaugurate very quick Q-side play for Black to distract White from his ambitions on the other wing.

The Taimanov Variation:
1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–K3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–QB3

(see diagram overleaf)

Black's plan here is based on playing Q–B2 and P–QR3 before committing the K-side pieces. This enables a very

quick . . . P–QN4 to be played if convenient, while also the KB may be developed on B4 or N5 before the QP is moved. Occasionally also, the KN may develop at K2 or even KR3 instead of the normal KB3. This flexibility is the greatest asset of the Taimanov Variation.



5 N–QB3

5 P–QB4 is ineffective here owing to the reply 5 . . . N–B3 6 N–QB3 B–N5 putting the white centre under immediate pressure; Black finds it too easy to free his game with P–Q4 under such circumstances. White can, however, set up a type of Maroczy Bind formation with 5 N–N5!? P–Q3 (to prevent N–Q6 ch) 6 P–QB4 (6 B–KB4 P–K4 7 B–K3 is another interesting continuation) 6 . . . N–B3 7 QN–B3 P–QR3 8 N–R3. After this Black must energetically prepare . . . P–QN4 or P–Q4 to break the bind; experience shows that his chances are no worse.

5 . . . P–QR3

5 . . . Q–B2 can also be played first, since 6 N(Q4)–N5 Q–N1 7 B–K3 N–B3 followed by P–QR3 is good for Black. Also occasionally played here is 5 . . . P–Q3 immediately reaching a Scheveningen formation but without having to worry about a quick advance of the white KNP to kick away the knight at KB3. Against this White has another aggressive system, the Veli-

mirovic Attack: 6 B–K3 N–B3 7 B–QB4 B–K2 8 Q–K2 followed by O–O–O and P–KN4.

6 **B–K2**

Other plans are:

(a) 6 P–KN3 Q–B2 7 B–N2 N–B3 8 O–O P–Q3 9 R–K1 B–Q2 with balanced chances.

(b) 6 B–K3 Q–B2 7 B–Q3 N–B3 8 O–O N–K4 9 P–KR3 (to prevent N(4)–N5) B–B4 and Black develops actively.

6 . . . **Q–B2**

7 **O–O N–B3**

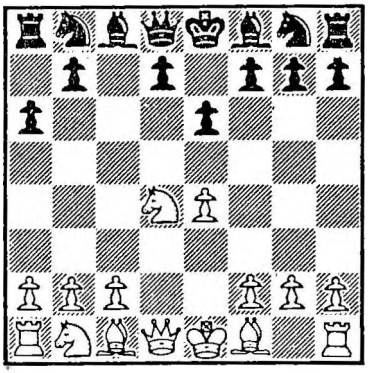
Now after 8 B–K3 Black can choose between 8 . . . B–K2 9 P–B4 P–Q3 where we are back in the Scheveningen, but with White not having had to spend a move on K–R1; or the very complex 8 . . . B–N5!? 9 N–R4! O–O (9 . . . P–QN4 10 N × N P × N 11 B–B5! or 9 . . . N × P 10 N × N Q × N 11 N–N6 R–QN1 12 Q–Q4 B–B1 13 B–B3 both favour White) 10 N × N NP × N 11 N–N6 R–N1 12 N × B KR × N! (12 . . . Q × N 13 P–K5 is worse for Black) 13 B × P R–Q1 14 B–Q3 B–Q3 and White cannot hold on to his extra pawn.

THE KAN VARIATION:

1 **P–K4 P–QB4** 2 **N–KB3 P–K3** 3 **P–Q4 P** × **P** 4 **N** × **P P–QR3** (see diagram overleaf)

This strange-looking variation has the same idea of early Q-side play as the Taimanov, but now it is even easier for Black to play . . . P–QN4 since he need not fear the reply N × N. After 5 N–QB3 Q–B2 6 B–K2 P–QN4 7 B–B3 B–N2 8 O–O N–QB3 Black succeeds in developing his Q-side as desired. White can, however, counter this plan in two ways which give a distinct character to the Kan Variation:

(a) 5 **P–QB4** N–KB3 6 N–QB3 B–N5 7 B–Q3 has the intention of keeping Black cramped. As usual in such positions, Black must endeavour to break out with P–Q4 or P–QN4.

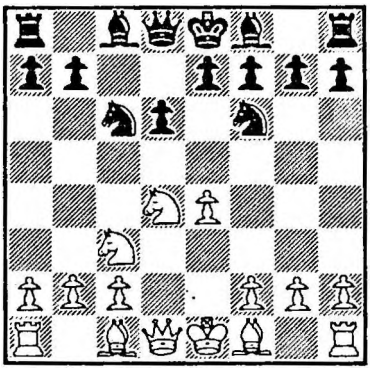


(b) 5 **B–Q3** is the most popular move, keeping the option of P–QB4 till later. After 5 . . . N–QB3 (5 . . . B–B4 6 N–N3 B–R2, or 5 . . . P–KN3, or simply 5 . . . N–KB3 6 O–O Q–B2 are other possibilities here) 6 N × N QP × N (6 . . . NP × N 7 O–O P–Q4 8 P–QB4! is uncomfortable for Black) 7 N–Q2 P–K4 8 N–B4 N–K2 9 O–O (9 N × P? Q–R4 ch) 9 . . . N–N3 10 B–K3 White stands a little better thanks to the weakness on Black's QN3.

Scheveningen fanciers, when choosing their move orders, must notice that however much they like the main-line positions there is no clear route leading to them. The classical Scheveningen must face the dangerous 6 P–KN4 attack, the Taimanov allows 5 N–N5 and the Kan allows 5 B–Q3 or 5 P–QB4. Take your choice.

THE BOLESLAVSKY AND RELATED SYSTEMS

We can best understand the different lines in which Black plays P–K4 if we look at some of the historical development. Let us start with the position after the moves 1 **P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–Q3.**



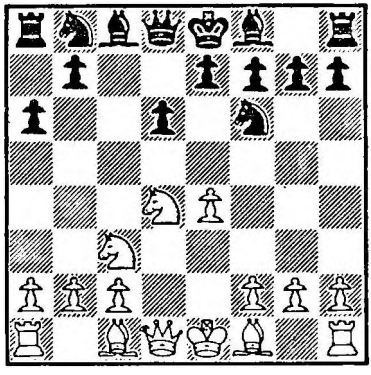
The normal move for White here used to be 6 **B–K2** leading to the Dragon after 6 . . . P–KN3 or the Scheveningen after 6 . . . P–K3. Around 1948, however, the Soviet grandmaster Isaak Boleslavsky demonstrated the strength of the move 6 **. . . P–K4**. Previously this move had been considered to weaken the Q4 square too much, but Boleslavsky showed that this weakness cannot be exploited. For example after 7 N–N3 (7 N × N P × N cures the ills in Black's pawn formation) 7 . . . B–K2 8 O–O O–O 9 P–B4 P–QR4 10 P–QR4 N–QN5 11 K–R1 B–K3 Black has an active game; 12 P–B5 is met by 12 . . . B–Q2 followed by B–B3 keeping firm control over the important Q4 square.

Because of this, the move 6 B–K2 rapidly dropped from favour and was replaced by two more aggressive systems:
(a) 6 **B–KN5** (the Rauser attack) P–K3 (6 . . . P–K4? 7 B × N is very good for White since 7 . . . Q × B? 8 N–Q5 followed by N–N5 wins) 7 Q–Q2 P–QR3 8 O–O–O with quite an aggressive formation against Black's enforced Scheveningen system.
(b) 6 **B–QB4** also prevents a Dragon since 6 . . . P–KN3? allows 7 N × N P × N 8 P–K5! when 8 . . . P × P? loses the queen to 9 B × P ch! Black therefore replies with 6 . . . P–K3 (or 6 . . . Q–N3 7 N–N3 P–K3 8 B–K3 Q–B2 9 O–O P–QR3) 7 B–K3 B–K2 8 Q–K2 (8 B–N3 followed by O–O

is less aggressive) leading to the Velimirovic Attack with O–O–O and P–KN4.

While both these variations are fully playable for Black the positions reached are a long way from the solidity of the Boleslavsky line. Therefore attention turned to other ways of incorporating the move . . . P–K4 into a black Sicilian system. We now come to the most important of these.

THE NAJDORF VARIATION:
1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–Q3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–QR3



We should note here that 5 . . . P–K4 immediately would be bad after 6 B–N5 ch! when 6 . . . QN–Q2 7 N–B5 or 6 . . . B–Q2 7 B × B ch Q × B 8 N–N3 both give White a clear advantage owing to the weak white squares in Black's camp. The move 5 . . . P–QR3 has thus a dual purpose: it keeps the white knight and bishop from QN5, while also preparing the thematic Sicilian Q-side advance of P–QN4. As in the Boleslavsky line, the move P–K4 forms an important part of Black' splan. Some examples of this are seen in the following variations:

(a) 6 B–K2 P–K4 7 N–N3 (7 N–B3 is best met by 7 . . . P–KR3! preventing satisfactory development of the white QB and leaving the enemy minor pieces rather ineffectively placed) 7 . . . B–K2 8 O–O B–K3 9 P–B4 Q–B2 10 P–QR4 QN–Q2.
(b) 6 B–K3 P–K4 7 N–N3 B–K3 8 Q–Q2 QN–Q2 9 P–B3 B–K2 10 O–O–O P–QN4.
(c) 6 P–KN3 P–K4 7 KN–K2 B–K2 8 B–N2 O–O 9 O–O QN–Q2 10 P–QR4 P–QN3 11 P–R3 B–N2.
(d) 6 P–B4 P–K4 7 N–B3 Q–B2 8 B–Q3 P–QN4 9 O–O QN–Q2 10 Q–K1 B–N2 11 B–Q2 P–N3 12 K–R1 B–N2; and in all cases Black's firm centre and active pieces give him fine prospects.

As in the case of the Boleslavsky line, however, White can play a couple of moves which make the plan of . . . P–K4 dubious. After 6 B–QB4 P–K4? 7 KN–K2 the white bishop is on the best diagonal to take advantage of the weakening effect of the pawn move. Therefore 6 **B–QB4** is met by 6 . . . **P–K3** 7 **B–N3 P–QN4** 8 **P–B4** (castling Q-side is no longer appropriate since Black's play is already so well advanced on that wing; therefore White must try another plan, based on attacking the black KP) 8 . . . **B–N2** (8 . . . P–N5 9 N–R4 N × P 10 O–O followed by P–KB5 gives a tremendous attack) 9 **P–B5 P–K4** 10 **KN–K2 QN–Q2** and Black has good prospects thanks to the easy way his pieces combine to attack the white KP. More dangerous for Black after 6 **B–QB4 P–K3** 7 **B–N3 P–QN4** is the flexible 8 **O–O** with such attacking possibilities as 8 . . . B–N2 9 R–K1 QN–Q2 10 B–N5 N–B4 11 B–Q5! when the black king finds life draughty after 11 . . . P × B 12 P × P ch K–Q2 13 P–QN4 N–R5 14 N × N P × N 15 P–QB4. Black therefore does best to meet 8 O–O with 8 . . . **B–K2** 9 **P–B4 O–O.** White has then the very tricky 10 **P–K5 P × P** 11 **P × P KN–Q2** 12 **Q–R5** at his disposal, but Black defends satisfactorily with 12 . . . **N–B4!** 13 **B–K3 N × B** 14 **RP × N B–N2**; this simple continuation avoids such traps as 12 . . . B–N2? 13 R × P! R × R 14

B × P Q–K1 15 B × R ch Q × B 16 Q × Q ch K × Q 17 P–K6 ch and White should win. As we can see, the variations with 6 B–QB4 can be very sharp and complex indeed; Black should, however, emerge intact.

Even more complex are the lines stemming from 6 B–KN5 which we summarize below:

6 B–KN5 P–K3

Again 6 . . . P–K4? is inadvisable; after 7 B × N Q × B 8 N–Q5 Q–Q1 9 N–B5 White's grip on the weakened central squares gives him a clear advantage.

7 P–B4 B–K2

Black has two appallingly complicated alternatives:

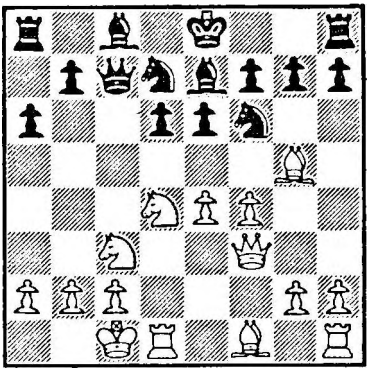
(a) 7 . . . Q–N3 8 Q–Q2 Q × P is the famous 'Poisoned Pawn' variation; after 9 R–QN1 Q–R6 both 10 P–K5 and 10 P–B5 have been analysed for years and will probably continue to be so without any conclusion ever being reached. It is important to realize that in this line Black is not just on a pawn-grabbing spree; with the QNP gone White can no longer castle long, and his black squares become vulnerable. Whether Black can stand the time lost in inflicting these injuries is another matter.

(b) 7 . . . P–QN4 8 P–K5 P × P 9 P × P Q–B2 is the no less complex Polugayevsky Variation. 10 P × N Q–K4 ch allows Black to regain his piece, so White often elects to play for attack with 10 Q–K2 KN–Q2 11 O–O–O. Again Black lives very dangerously in this line, but if he survives the onslaught he can emerge with a clear advantage thanks to the weakness of the white KP.

8 Q–B3 Q–B2

8 . . . P–KR3 9 B–R4 P–KN4?! 10 P × P KN–Q2 is another famous line known as the Göteborg Variation after the tournament in 1955 where three Russians beat three Argentinians from this position, all the games continuing 11 N × P (11 Q–R5 is also good) P × N 12 Q–R5 ch K–B1 13 B–N5! and all the South Americans found the attack too much for them.

9 O–O–O QN–Q2



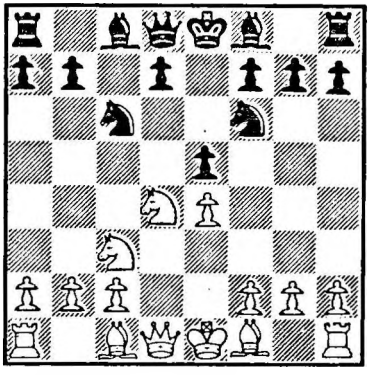
White can pursue his attack with 10 P–KN4 P–N4 11 B × N (11 P–K5? B–N2) N × B 12 P–N5 N–Q2 and now either 13 P–B5 N–B4! (13 . . . B × P ch 14 K–N1 is more difficult for Black) or 13 P–QR3 R–QN1 14 P–KR4 P–N5 15 P × P R × P 16 B–R3 Q–N3 17 N–B5! with a very sharp game in either case. These are highly dangerous lines for both players and quite typical of the 6 B–KN5 variation. Note especially how the black king stays in the centre (the safest place for it!) and will only castle when his other rook demands to be allowed to join the attack.

Before leaving these P–K4 systems for Black, there are two more we must mention in which that pawn move is played at an earlier stage.

THE PELIKAN VARIATION:

1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–K4 (see diagram overleaf)

6 N(Q4)–N5! is now the only move to make sense since 6 N–B5 P–Q4 or 6 N–N3 B–N5 or 6 N–B3 B–N5 all give Black good positions. Black continues **6 . . . P–Q3 7 B–N5**



(or 7 N–Q5 N × N 8 P × N N–K2 9 P–QB4) 7 . . . **P–QR3** 8 **B** × **N P** × **B** 9 **N–R3** and now:

(a) 9 . . . **P–Q4** (Pelikan) leads to a White end-game advantage after 10 N × P! (10 P × P B × N 11 P × B Q–R4 12 Q–Q2 N–Q5 favours Black) 10 . . . B × N 11 P × B B–K3 12 B–B4 Q–R4 ch 13 Q–Q2 Q × Q ch 14 K × Q.

(b) 9 . . . **P–QN4** 10 **N–Q5 P–B4** (Sveshnikov) is a very trendy line where Black must be prepared to face all manner of horrors including 11 B × P!? P × B 12 N × P or the quieter 11 B–Q3 B–K3 12 Q–R5 B–N2 13 O–O. Black's game is highly suspect in all these lines, but his bishop pair and central pawn mass have scored a number of surprising victories.

THE LÖWENTHAL VARIATION: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P P–K4

This is an equally drastic attempt to grab a quick share of the centre. Again 5 **N–N5!** is the correct response, when 5 . . . P–Q3 6 N(N5)–B3! leaves White nicely in control of Q5. More critical is 5 . . . **P–QR3!?** 6 **N–Q6 ch B** × **N** 7 **Q** × **B Q–B3** when White must play carefully to gain advantage. For example:

(a) 8 Q × Q N × Q 9 N–B3 N–QN5! is fine for Black.
(b) 8 Q–Q1 Q–N3 9 N–B3 KN–K2 10 B–K3 P–Q4! with play for the pawn after either 11 N × P N × N 12 Q × N B–K3 or 11 P × P N–N5 12 B–Q3 N × B ch.
(c) 8 Q–R3 KN–K2 (8 . . . Q–N3 9 B–K3! Q × KP 10 N–B3 gives a tremendous initiative for the pawn) 9 N–B3 R–QN1! 10 B–K3 P–QN4 11 N–Q5 N × N 12 P × N P–N5! with counterplay for Black.
(d) 8 Q–B7 is the most secure road to advantage; after 8 . . . KN–K2 9 N–B3 N–N5 10 B–Q3 P–Q4 11 O–O P–Q5 (11 . . . O–O 12 P–B4 is good for White) 12 N–R4 (12 N–K2 is also good) 12 . . . N × B 13 P × N Q–B3 14 Q × Q N × Q 15 N–N6 gives the better game for White.

OTHER LINES OF THE SICILIAN

A: The Sicilian Four Knights': 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–K3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 N–B3

This is a relatively quiet line in which White has to be satisfied with a small but enduring advantage. Note, incidentally, that the vigorous 5 . . . B–N5 is dubious in view of the reply 6 P–K5! when 6 . . . Q–R4 7 P × N! B × N ch 8 P × B Q × P ch 9 Q–Q2 Q × R 10 P–QB3! Q–N8 (11 N–N3 was threatened) 11 B–Q3 Q–N3 12 P × P R–N1 13 Q–R6 gives White a winning position. Also 6 . . . N–K5 7 Q–N4! N × N 8 Q × NP R–B1 9 P–QR3 N–N4 ch (neither 9 . . . Q–R4 10 N–N3 Q–Q4 11 B–Q3 nor 9 . . . B–R4 10 B–KR6 Q–K2 11 N–N3 is any better) 10 P × B N × N 11 B–KN5! Q–N3 12 B–KR6 Q × P ch 13 P–B3 gives White a clear advantage. The best try is 6 . . . N–Q4, but 7 Q–N4 K–B1 8 P–QR3 is still in White's favour. We should mention too that if White wishes to avoid these complications, he has a perfectly valid alternative in 6 N–N5.

6 N(Q4)–N5!

6 B–K2 or 6 P–KN3 would be met by 6 . . . B–N5, so this is the only way to gain advantage. The threat of N–Q6 ch forces Black to take action.

6 . . . B–N5

6 . . . P–Q3 7 B–KB4 P–K4 8 B–N5 takes us back to the Pelikan variation.

7 P–QR3

7 N–Q6 ch K–K2! 8 N × B ch R × N loses so much time for White that Black's temporary inconvenience in having his king displaced counts for little.

7 . . . B × N ch
8 N × B P–Q4
9 P × P N × P

Now after 10 N × N P × N 11 B–Q3 N–K4 White has no advantage. Instead, 10 B–Q2! preserves the advantage of the two bishops in conjunction with the majority of pawns on the Q-side; after 10 . . . N × N 11 B × N Q × Q ch 12 R × Q P–B3 13 P–B4 White has a strong initiative in the end-game. For this reason, Black does better to recapture immediately with pawn instead of knight at move 9. After 9 . . . P × P 10 B–Q3 O–O 11 O–O P–Q5 (11 . . . N–K4 12 B–KN5 is now clearly good for White) 12 N–K2 B–N5 13 P–KB3 B–K3 14 B–KN5 White still preserves the advantage.

B: O'Kelly's Variation: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–QR3

This is a sort of prematurely born Najdorf Variation. The idea is to meet 3 P–Q4 with 3 . . . P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–K4! 6 N–N3 (or 6 N–B3) B–N5! with immediate activity and prospects of increasing the initiative with . . . P–Q4. The drawback to the whole scheme is that White does not have to play 3 P–Q4 and after other replies 2 . . . P–QR3 may have

less significance. For example 3 P–QB3 (3 P–QB4 N–QB3 4 P–Q4 is also good) P–Q4 4 P × P Q × P 5 P–Q4 and the black move of the QRP is rendered useless.

c: The Nimzowitsch Variation: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3

This can become very complicated; the main line of 3 P–K5 N–Q4 4 N–B3 P–K3 (4 . . . N × N 5 QP × N favours White) 5 N × N P × N 6 P–Q4 N–B3!? 7 P × P B × P 8 Q × P Q–N3 9 B–QB4 B × P ch 10 K–K2 O–O 11 R–B1 B–B4 12 N–N5 N–Q5 ch 13 K–Q1 N–K3 14 P–B3 is considered to favour White, but in view of the complexities many prefer to avoid such shaky ground by playing such a move as 7 P–B3!? retaining a small advantage, or simply playing 3 N–B3 inviting transposition back to normal lines after 3 . . . P–Q3 (3 . . . P–Q4 4 P × P N × P 5 B–N5 ch is promising for White) 4 P–Q4 P × P 5 N × P.

Finally we come to those lines of the Sicilian where White does not play P–Q4. In general these are considerably less sharp than the open lines discussed earlier, though often the strategic complexity can be just as intense.

THE CLOSED SICILIAN: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–QB3

With this system, White intends a K-side fianchetto and a slow build-up leading to an eventual advance of pawns on the K-side. Black must, however, remember that White has not yet totally renounced the possibility of P–Q4; he can still revert with 3 N–KB3 and 4 P–Q4, so Black must choose a second move which allows whatever Sicilian variation is his favourite.

2 . . . N–QB3

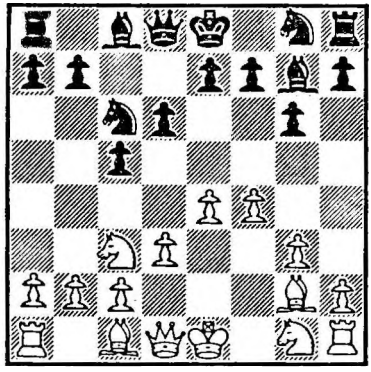
Black has a good alternative in 2 . . . P–K3 when 3 P–KN3

P–Q4 4 P × P P × P 5 B–N2 N–KB3 6 KN–K2 P–Q5 7 N–K4 N × N 8 B × N N–Q2 9 P–Q3 N–B3 gives a level game. Remember though that Black must be prepared to enter normal P–K3 lines after 3 N–KB3 and 4 P–Q4, so that option is not so attractive to a Dragon or Najdorf Variation player.

3 P–KN3

This is the characteristic move of the closed variation. From KN2 the bishop adds to White's control of Q5.

3 . . . P–KN3
4 B–N2 B–N2
5 P–Q3 P–Q3
6 P–B4



This is more vigorous than the older plan of 6 B–K3 followed by KN–K2 and O–O. Now White retains the option of developing his knight on KB3 behind the KBP. His plan from the diagram position is based on a K-side attack with P–KB5 opening the lines for the white pieces. In order to appreciate Black's correct play, we should look first at a couple of drastic losses: (a) Spassky–Geller, sixth match game, 1968: 6 . . . N–B3 7 N–B3 O–O 8 O–O R–N1 9 P–KR3 P–QN4 10 P–R3 P–QR4 11 B–K3 P–N5 12 P × P RP × P 13 N–K2 B–N2 14 P–N3 R–R1 15 R–B1 R–R7 16 P–N4! Q–R1 17 Q–K1 Q–R3 18 Q–B2 N–R2 19 P–B5 N–N4 20 P × P RP × P

21 N–N5 N–R6 22 Q–R4 R–B1 23 R × N! P × R 24 Q–R7 ch K–B1 25 N × P! R × P (25 . . . K × N 26 B–R6 R–KN1 27 N–B4 R × P 28 R–B1 gives White a winning attack) 26 B–R6! R × R ch 27 N × R K × N 28 Q × B ch K–K1 29 P–N5 P–B4 30 Q × P ch K–Q2 31 Q–B7 ch K–B3 32 P × P ch Resigns. White exchanges on QN7 then marches his pawns to queen.

(b) Bilek–Gheorghiu, Bucharest, 1968: 6 . . . P–K4 7 N–R3 KN–K2 8 O–O O–O? (8 . . . N–Q5 or 8 . . . P × P are more circumspect) 9 P–B5! P × P 10 P × P B × P 11 R × B! N × R 12 B–K4 KN–Q5 13 Q–R5 R–K1 (or 13 . . . P–B4 14 B–Q5 ch K–R1 15 N–N5 P–KR3 16 Q–N6!) 14 Q × RP ch K–B1 15 B–N5 Q–Q2 16 N–Q5 R–K3 17 R–KB1 N × P 18 B–N6 N(B7)–Q5 19 B–R6 Resigns.

These examples should serve to show that Black must beware the lightning attack. If he looks after his king, however, he should be able to obtain active play on the Q-side and good middle-game chances. Both 6 . . . N–B3 and 6 . . . P–K4 are fully playable if handled with more care than in the above games; two other perfectly acceptable plans are 6 . . . R–N1 7 N–B3 P–QN4 8 O–O P–N5 9 N–Q5 P–K3 10 N–K3 KN–K2 with an intricate position, and 6 . . . P–B4!? 7 N–B3 (7 P × P P × P 8 Q–R5 ch K–B1 gains nothing for White) 7 . . . N–B3 8 O–O O–O and Black leaves . . . R–QN1 and P–N4 for later. As we can see, the crucial point in this line is White's KB5 square, but Black must remember that White can always revert to central play by preparing P–QB3 and P–Q4. Although the Closed Sicilian is a far slower system than the lines with 3 P–Q4, the resulting positions can become just as sharp.

OTHER LINES AGAINST THE SICILIAN

A: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 P–QB3

This is one of the most popular ways of avoiding the main lines. White threatens to establish a big centre with P–Q4. Black has two adequate replies:

(a) 2 . . . **N–KB3** attacks the KP and hopes to make the white centre pawns vulnerable to undermining manoeuvres. After 3 P–K5 N–Q4 4 P–Q4 P × P 5 P × P (or 5 Q × P P–K3 6 N–B3 N–QB3 7 Q–K4 P–B4 with an active game) 5 . . . P–Q3 6 N–KB3 N–QB3 (6 . . . P–K3 is also very solid) 7 B–QB4 N–N3 8 B–QN5 P–Q4 chances are equal.

(b) 2 . . . **P–Q4** is another thematic counter; after 3 P × P Q × P 4 P–Q4 P–K3 (4 . . . N–QB3 5 N–KB3 P × P 6 P × P B–N5 is dangerous for Black: 7 N–B3! B × N 8 P × B! Q × QP 9 Q × Q N × Q 10 N–N5! and Black has problems defending) 5 N–KB3 N–QB3 6 B–Q3 P × P 7 P × P N–KB3 8 N–B3 Q–Q3 9 O–O B–K2 with equal chances; the white isolated pawn is balanced by his chances of creating a K-side attack.

B: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 P–KB4

is best met by preparing . . . P–Q4, but taking care not to fall behind in development. After 2 . . . P–K3 3 N–KB3 N–QB3 4 B–N5 KN–K2 5 O–O (5 N–B3 can be met by 5 . . . N–Q5) 5 . . . P–QR3 6 B–K2 (6 B × N N × B is fine for Black) P–KN3 6 P–Q3 B–N2 7 P–B3 and Black has the choice between 7 . . . P–Q4 and the more restrained 7 . . . O–O 8 B–K3 P–Q3 in either case with a perfectly good position.

C: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–QB3 3 B–N5

aims for quick development and centre control. After 3 . . . P–KN3 (3 . . . Q–N3 or 3 . . . P–K3 are also possible) 4 O–O

B–N2 5 P–B3 (5 B × N QP × B gives Black no real problems) 5 . . . N–B3 6 P–K5 (or 6 R–K1 O–O 7 P–Q4 P × P 8 P × P P–Q4 with equal chances) 6 . . . N–Q4 7 P–Q4 P × P 8 P × P O–O 9 N–B3 N–B2 followed by . . . P–Q3 with counterplay against the centre.

D: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–Q3 3 B–N5 ch

is similar to the previous line. Black's simplest reply is 3 . . . B–Q2 (3 . . . N–Q2 and 3 . . . N–B3 are also played frequently) 4 B × B ch N × B (or 4 . . . Q × B 5 P–QB4 followed by O–O and P–Q4 with a small space advantage for White) 5 O–O (5 P–B4 N–K4! makes it hard for White to realize his plan of P–Q4) 5 . . . KN–B3 6 Q–K2 P–K3 7 P–B3 B–K2 8 P–Q4 O–O and Black has nothing to fear; after 9 P–K5 N–K1 the effect of the earlier bishop exchange is just to make it much more difficult for White to create any attacking possibilities.

E: The Morra Gambit: 1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 P–Q4 P × P 3 P–QB3

White gives up a pawn in the style of the Danish Gambit. Black can decline with 3 . . . N–KB3 4 P–K5 N–Q4 leading back to A, the 2 P–QB3 attack, but he can also safely take the pawn: 3 . . . P × P 4 N × P N–QB3 5 B–QB4 P–Q3 6 N–B3 P–K3! (6 . . . N–B3? 7 P–K5! P × P 8 Q × Q ch K × Q 9 N–KN5 is bad for Black) 7 O–O and now either the straightforward 7 . . . N–B3 8 Q–K2 B–K2 9 R–Q1 P–K4 when White has some pressure for his pawn; or the more sophisticated 7 . . . B–K2 8 Q–K2 B–Q2 9 R–Q1 P–QR3 10 B–B4 P–K4 11 B–K3 N–B3 when Black has saved a move on the previous line.

F: Finally, the **Wing Gambit:**
1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 P–QN4 P×P 3 P–QR3

is a dubious attempt to grab more than White's fair share of initiative. After 3 . . . P × P 4 B × P Black certainly finds himself under pressure, but instead, 3 . . . P–Q4! 4 P × P Q×P 5N–KB3 (necessary to prevent Q–K4 ch) P–K4 leaves White with nothing real to show for his pawn deficit.

We conclude this Sicilian Defence chapter with a famous draw between two World Champions. The game is a typical well-played Sicilian by both sides, with attack and counter-attack balanced as finely as possible.

WHITE: ALEKHINE BLACK: BOTVINNIK
(Nottingham, 1936)

1 P–K4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 P–Q3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P N–KB3 5 N–QB3 P–KN3 6 B–K2 B–N2 7 B–K3 N–B3 8 N–N3 B–K3

8 . . . O–O 9 P–B4 P–QR4! is now considered a more accurate and energetic plan. White must either allow the further advance of the QRP or play P–QR4 himself, giving the black knight a fine square at QN5.

9 P–B4 O–O 10 P–N4 P–Q4!

Black must react quickly in the centre or the bold white-pawn advance will be completely justified.

11 P–B5

11 P–K5 P–Q5! 12 N × P (12 P × N B × BP!) 12 . . . N × N 13 B × N N × P! gives White nothing.

11 . . . B–B1 12 P × QP N–N5 13 P–Q6

13 B–B3! P × P 14 P–QR3 P × P 15 B–N2! is a more promising try.

13 . . . Q × P 14 B–B5 Q–B5!

14 . . . Q × Q ch 15 R × Q! would have left White clearly on

top. Now Black loses a piece but has enough counterplay for a draw.

15 **R–KB1 Q × RP** 16 **B × N N × P!**

Not 16 . . . Q–N6 ch 17 R–B2 N × P when 18 N–K4! gives White the time he needs to organize a defence.

17 **B × N Q–N6 ch** 18 **R–B2**

18 K–Q2? B–R3 ch or 18 K–K2 Q × B ch would win for Black.

18 **. . . Q–N8 ch** 19 **R–B1 Q–N6 ch** 20 **R–B2 Q–N8 ch draw.**

CHAPTER 6

Half-Open Games II

The moves 1 . . . P–K4 and 1 . . . P–QB4 are Black's only replies to 1 P–K4 which seek directly to prevent 2 P–Q4 by guarding that square. Of the other half-open defences we may say that Black in general allows White a certain freedom in the centre, but makes his own preparations to claim space before the middle game is under way. In the French and Caro-Kann defences, Black strikes almost immediately with P–Q4, in the Pirc Black plans later central action with either P–K4 or P–QB4, while the Alekhine Defence allows a big White centre which is itself vulnerable to attack. All these defences thus conform to the principles of central play, though each has its individual interpretation.

THE FRENCH DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 P–K3

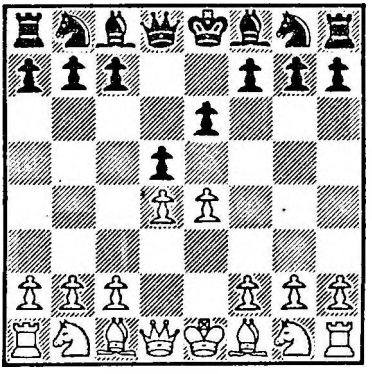
Black announces his intention of playing . . . P–Q4, which White can hardly prevent. 2 P–QB4 would be met by 2 . . . P–QB4! when any attempts by White to remedy his pawn structure by playing P–Q4 will only lead him into a poor Sicilian position. Chigorin used to play 2 Q–K2 to deter the advance of Black's QP owing to the hidden pin on the K-file. However, after 2 . . . P–QB4 3 P–KN3 N–QB3 4 B–N2 P–KN3 5 N–KB3 B–N2 6 O–O KN–K2 Black's development is easy and the white queen prematurely committed to K2.

2 P–Q4

2 P–Q3 P–Q4 3 N–Q2 is a restrained alternative; White

intends to complete his development with a K-side fianchetto and lead the game into the realms of the King's Indian Attack, Black can continue either with 3 . . . P–QB4 4 KN–B3 N–QB3 5 P–KN3 N–B3 (or 5 . . . B–Q3 6 B–N2 KN–K2 with a sound formation) 6 B–N2 B–K2 which is a position discussed under the King's Indian Attack, or can try a more radical solution with 3 . . . N–KB3 4 KN–B3 N–B3 5 P–KN3 P × P 6 P × P P–K4 7 B–N2 B–QB4 with free development. Note how Black delays the pawn exchange until White has played P–KN3. Otherwise the white bishop can develop effectively to QN5 and life is not so easy for Black.

2 . . . P–Q4



White must now decide what to do about the attack on his KP. Depending on his choice the further course of the game may adopt totally different characters, ranging from the simple Exchange Variation, 3 P × P, and the tactical Advance Variation 3 P–K5, to the strategic nuances of the Tarrasch Variation 3 N–Q2 and complexities of the Main Line with 3 N–QB3. We shall consider these separately.

The Exchange Variation: 3 P × P P × P

is rightly considered oversimplifying if White hopes for advantage. The symmetrical nature of the pawns tends to lead to

exchanges and a draw. A typical continuation is 4 B–Q3 N–QB3 5 P–QB3 B–Q3 6 N–B3 KN–K2 and Black prepares to rid himself of his slightly restricted bishop with . . . B–KB4. The open K-file tends to encourage exchanges of major pieces and the whole variation is rather drawish.

The Advance Variation: 3 P–K5

This is much more interesting. White claims a large proportion of central space and hopes to cramp his opponent, especially that bad French bishop on QB1. The advanced pawns, however, provide a target; Black's play is based on quick development with a view to undermining the centre.

3 . . . P–QB4

4 P–QB3

Supporting the centre is most logical. After 4 P × P N–QB3 5 N–KB3 B × P Black's game is not difficult.

4 . . . N–QB3

4 . . . Q–N3 5 N–B3 B–Q2 is another logical plan, intending to exchange the bad bishop with B–N4. White can try to take advantage of the time lost in this manoeuvre by continuing 6 B–K2 B–N4 7 P–B4! when 7 . . . P × BP 8 N–B3 or 7 . . . B × P 8 B × B P × B? (correct is 8 . . . Q–N5 ch! 9 QN–Q2 P × B 10 P–QR3 Q–N4 though 11 P × P B × P 12 Q–K2 still leaves White with the initiative) 9 P–Q5! both leave Black very much on the defensive.

5 N–B3 Q–N3

This is the most common move, continuing the plan of pressure against the White QP. Attempting to undermine the other centre pawn with 5 . . . P–B3 is strongly met by 6 B–QN5 when the resulting opening of the position by pawn exchanges only leads to a White initiative. 5 . . . B–Q2, however, is a good alternative, keeping open the possibility of . . . P–B3 which can be played in conjunction with Q–B2 and O–O–O.

After 5 . . . Q–N3 White must decide how to complete his de-

velopment. Three different moves have been played, but none is especially convincing:

(a) 6 **B–K2** P × P 7 P × P KN–K2 8 N–B3 (or 8 P–QN3 N–B4 9 B–N2 B–N5 ch 10 K–B1 P–KR4 with equality) 8 . . . N–B4 9 N–QR4 Q–R4 ch with equal chances.

(b) The more aggressive 6 **B–Q3** introduces the Milner-Barry Gambit: 6 . . . P × P (6 . . . B–Q2? 7 P × P B × P 8 O–O is bad for Black; his pieces become too tangled in the face of the threat to advance White's QN and QR-pawns) 7 P × P B–Q2 (7 . . . N × QP?? was impossible, of course, but now it is a real threat) 8 O–O!? N × QP 9 N × N Q × N 10 N–B3! Now it is very dangerous for Black to grab the second pawn: 10 . . . Q × P 11 R–K1 Q–Q3 12 N–N5 gives a strong attack, but instead the cautious 10 . . . P–QR3 11 Q–K2 N–K2 leaves White with insufficient compensation for his pawn.

(c) 6 **P–QR3** is a curious idea, with the intention of gaining space with P–QN4. Black does best to block the position with 6 . . . P–B5 and try to take advantage of the weakened white squares; after 7 P–KN3 B–Q2 8 B–N2 O–O–O 9 O–O N–R4 11 QN–Q2 P–KR3 the game is level. Note that such Black play is only possible because of White's advance of the QRP. Otherwise the advanced black QBP would be liable to undermining with P–QN3.

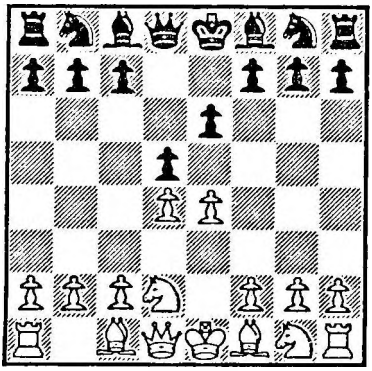
The Tarrasch Variation: 3 N–Q2

(see diagram overleaf)

This is White's most secure method of protecting his KP. 3 N–QB3 has more direct influence on the centre and does not block the bishop, but on Q2 the knight is less vulnerable to a pin by the bishop, while also the QBP is left free to advance to QB3 to add to central protection. Black has three main possibilities:

(a) 3 . . . **N–KB3** 4 P–K5 KN–Q2 leads to a position similar to the advance variation, but with the important difference that the black KN is now badly placed to make its way to KB4 and

increase the pressure against the white QP. For this reason White can afford the luxury of 5 P–KB4 P–QB4 6 P–B3 N–QB3 7 QN–B3! with every prospect of advantage; 7 . . . Q–N3 is met by 8 P–KN3 P × P 9 P × P B–N5 ch 10 K–B2! P–B3 11 K–N2! while 7 . . . Q–R4 may also be answered by 8 K–B2. Black finds it very difficult to make any impression on the big centre.



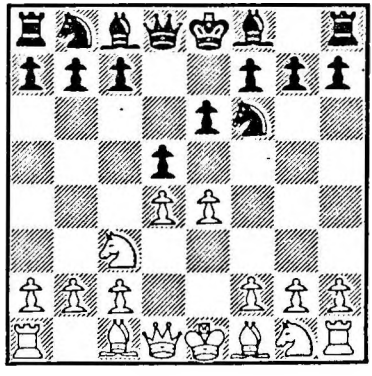
(b) 3 . . . **N–QB3** renounces the thematic P–QB4 and hopes for piece play against the centre. After 4 KN–B3 (4 P–QB3 can be met by 4 . . . P–K4!) 4 . . . N–B3 5 P–K5 N–Q2 6 N–N3 B–K2 7 P–B3 O–O Black maintains possibilities of sniping at the centre with P–KB3, but White's game remains the freer.

(c) 3 . . . **P–QB4** is considered the main line; Black frees his game completely at the cost of allowing an isolated pawn. After 4 KP × P KP × P (4 . . . Q × P 5 KN–B3 P × P 6 B–B4 Q–Q3 7 O–O N–QB3 8 N–N3 White has an annoying development lead) 5 B–N5 ch B–Q2 6 Q–K2 ch B–K2 7 P × P N–KB3 8 N–N3 O–O 9 N–B3 R–K1 10 B–K3 P–QR3 11 B × B N × B Black regains his pawn with equal chances. Experience has shown that the isolated queen's pawn is not a great liability in this variation, though it must be admitted that Black's wins are few from such positions.

The Main Line: 3 N–QB3

After this move, Black must decide how to continue his play against the centre. Exchanging with 3 . . . P × P 4 N × P avoids immediate problems, but leaves White with more space; after 4 . . . N–Q2 5 N–KB3 KN–B3 6 N × N ch N × N 7 B–Q3 B–K2 8 Q–K2 P–B4 9 P × P Q–R4 ch 10 B–Q2 Q × BP 11 O–O–O Black will have to face a powerful K-side attack. Black must therefore increase pressure against the KP with either 3 . . . N–KB3 or 3 . . . B–N5; the former tends to lead to a more cramped game and is nowadays less popular than the vigorous 3 . . . B–N5.

A: The Classical Variation: 3 . . . N–KB3



4 B–N5

4 P–K5 KN–Q2 5 P–B4 is also possible, though somewhat less attractive than in the similar position arising from the Tarrasch Variation. Here White is less well placed to support his centre with P–QB3, so Black's counterplay is more easily organized. After 5 . . . P–QB4 6 N–B3 N–QB3 7 B–K3 Black can either simplify with 7 . . . P × P 8 N × P N × N 9 B × N N–N1! 10 B–Q3 N–B3, or increase the complexity with 7 . . . Q–N3.

4 . . . B–K2

4 . . . B–N5 is the sharp MacCutcheon Variation which does not seem quite good enough to equalize: 5 P–K5 P–KR3 6 B–Q2 (6 P × N P × B 7 P × P R–N1 8 Q–R5 Q–B3 or 6 B–R4 P–KN4 give White no more than equality) 6 . . . B × N 7 P × B N–K5 8 Q–N4 P–KN3 (or 8 . . . K–B1 9 P–KR4! P–QB4 10 R–R3 Q–R4 11 B–Q3 N × B 12 R–N3! P–KN3 13 K × N P × P 14 Q × QP with good attacking chances for White) 9 B–Q3 N × B 10 K × N P–QB4 (not 10 . . . Q–N4 ch 11 Q × Q P × Q 12 P–KN4! and Black cannot save his KNP) 11 Q–B4 N–B3 12 N–B3 and Black's permanent weaknesses and bad bishop are more important than the displaced white king; White stands better.

4 . . . P × P 5 N × P B–K2 is a little better than the comparable variation with 3 . . . P × P, since now 6 N × N ch B × N commits White to more exchanges than he wants. However, by playing 6 B × N! White keeps the advantage after either 6 . . . B × B 7 N–KB3 followed by Q–Q2 and O–O–O, or 6 . . . P × P 7 Q–Q2 P–KB4 8 N–QB3 B–B3 9 O–O–O.

5 P–K5 KN–Q2

5 . . . N–K5 is not quite correct: 6 B × B (or 6 N × N B × B 7 N × B Q × N 8 P–KN3 and 9 P–KB4 with advantage) 6 . . . Q × B (6 . . . N × N is strongly met by 7 Q–N4) 7 N × N P × N 8 Q–K2 P–QN3 9 O–O–O B–N2 10 P–KN3 and the advanced black pawn is a weakness.

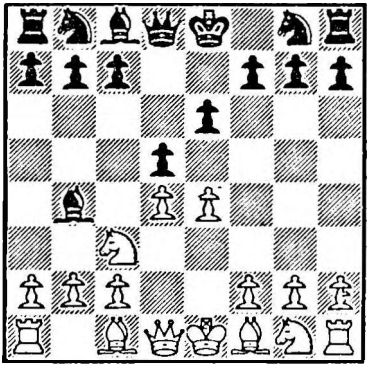
6 B × B

6 P–KR4 is the dynamic Alekhine–Chatard Attack. After 6 . . . B × B 7 P × B Q × P 8 N–R3 Q–K2 9 N–B4 and 10 Q–N4 White has a huge initiative for the pawn. Black may also decline the offer with 6 . . . P–QB4 7 B × B K × B! (7 . . . Q × B 8 N – N5 is embarrassing) 8 P–B4 Q–N3 9 N–B3 though White maintains advantage after either 9 . . . Q × P 10 N–QN5 Q–N5 ch 11 K–B2 or 9 . . . N–QB3 10 N–QR4 Q–R4 ch 11 P–B3 P × P 12 P–QN4!

6 . . . Q × B
7 P–B4 O–O

White has kept his central pawn wedge and the black bishop remains constricted. After **J** Q–Q2 P–QB4 9 N–B3 N–QB3 10 P × P (10 O–O–O P–B5 gives Black chances of developing a pawn roller on the Q-side) 10 . . . N × BP 11 O–O–O P–B3 12 P × P Q× P 13 P–KN3 R–Q1 14 N–Q4 White maintains the advantage despite the central liquidation. His superior bishop and control of the black squares ensure that White will have a significant advantage in any end-game.

B: The Winawer Variation: 3 . . . B–N5



This is the most complicated of all French Defence variations. Black announces his willingness to exchange his good bishop in the hope of Q-side counterplay.

4 P–K5

White has scarcely a good alternative if he wishes to preserve an initiative:

(a) 4 B–Q3 P × P 5 B × P N–KB3 6 B–B3 P–B4 7 N–K2 N–B3.

(b) 4 KN–K2 P × P 5 P–QR3 B–K2 6 N × P N–QB3 7 B–K3 N–B3.

(c) 4 B–Q2 P × P 5 Q–N4 is a trappy line most simply met by

5 . . . N–KB3 6 Q× NP R–N1 7 Q–R6 P–N3 8 O–O–O B–N2.

(d) 4 P–QR3 B × N ch 5 P × B P × P 6 Q–N4 is the sharpest alternative to 4 P–K5, but here too Black has an easy game with 6 . . . N–KB3 7 Q × NP R–N1 8 Q–R6 QN–Q2 9 N–K2 P–N3 10 B–N5 Q–K2 11 Q–R4 B–N2.

In all these lines the fluid centre gives Black counterplay. By closing the centre with 4 P–K5 White hopes to establish black-square domination while at the same time keeping Black cramped.

4 . . . P–QB4

Attacking the centre in this manner is the most natural continuation, though Black does have alternative plans based on possibilities of exchanging his bad bishop by means of P–QN3 and B–R3. The immediate 4 . . . P–QN3 may be met by 5 Q–N4, so usually Black prefaces this move with 4 . . . Q–Q2. In that case 5 Q–N4 is effectively met by 5 . . . P–KB4! so White's main choice is between 5 P–QR3 B × N ch 6 P × B P–QN3 7 P–QR4 B–R3 8 B × B N × B 9 Q–N4 P–KB4 10 Q–R5 ch P–N3 11 Q–K2, and 5 B–Q2 P–QN3 6 N–B3 B–R3 7 B × B N × B 8 O–O; the latter method has the merit of avoiding doubled pawns and keeping better prospects thanks to the advantage in space and development.

5 P–QR3

5 B–Q2 N–K2 6 N–N5 (or 6 P–QR3 B × N 7 B × B P–QN3 with the intention of exchanging bishops by means of B–R3) B × B ch 7 Q × B O–O gives White nothing. By attacking the bishop with his pawn, White allows the doubling of his QBPs, after which his centre is supported by the pawn at QB3.

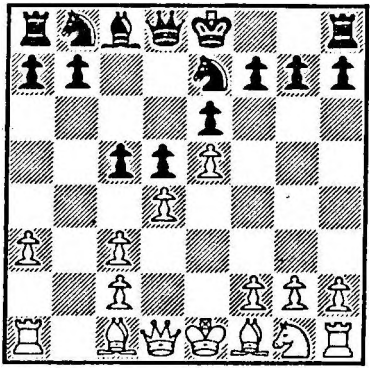
5 . . . B × N ch

Other continuations are more dubious. 5 . . . P × P 6 P × B P × N 7 N–B3! P × P 8 B × P gives White a lasting initiative and makes it impossible for Black to find a safe refuge for his king in the middle game. 5 . . . B–R4 is more interesting,

but allows 6 P–QN4!? when 6 . . . P × QP (6 . . . P × NP 7 N–N5! N–QB3 8 P × P B × P ch 9 P–B3 B–K2 10 B–R3 is very strong for White) 7 Q–N4 N–K2 8 P × B P × N 9 Q × NP R–N1 10 Q × P QN–B3 11 N–B3 gives a complex position which appears according to current analysis to be in White's favour.

6 P × B N–K2

6 . . . Q–B2 also gives White the choice between quiet play with 7 N–B3 N–K2 8 P–QR4 and more violent methods with 7 Q–N4 P–B4 8 Q–N3 N–K2 9 Q × P R–N1 10 Q × P P × P 11 K–Q1. These lines should be compared with similar choices below.



The position now reached is characteristic of the Winawer Variation. Black intends to complete his development with QN–B3, B–Q2 and Q–R4 or Q–B2, while also keeping open possibilities of attacking the centre with P–B3. White can choose between outright aggression with 7 Q–N4, hoping for a quick attack, or more positional methods with particular attention to the QR3–KB8 diagonal and the black squares in general. One example of each plan can illustrate the possibilities:

(a) 7 Q–N4 P × P 8 Q × NP R–N1 9 Q × P Q–B2 10 N–K2 QN–B3 11 P–B4 (11 P × P? N × QP!) 11 . . . B–Q2 12

Q–Q3 P × P when 13 N × P P–R3 leaves Black with a strong initiative based on Q-side play with . . . N–R4 and R–QB1; experience shows that Black's chances of counterplay are excellent in this line.

(b) 7 N–B3 B–Q2 8 P–QR4 (8 P × P!? is an interesting alternative; after 8 . . . Q–B2 9 B–Q3 B–R5 10 R–QN1 N–Q2 11 R–N4! the rook can shift to the K-side and White's active piece play gives good compensation for the pawn weaknesses) 8 . . . Q–R4 9 B–Q2 QN–B3 10 B–K2 P–B3 11 P–B4 Q–B2 and the white centre dissolves into a position with balanced chances. Black can also play this type of position in a more rigid manner with P–QB5 and O–O–O, but White can then be better prepared for the . . . P–KB3 disruption. In general, the quicker Black can create central play, the more difficult it is for White to reach positions where his bishop pair becomes an effective force.

THE CARO-KANN DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 P–QB3

The Caro-Kann has the reputation of being one of Black's soundest defences to 1 P–K4. Whether this reputation is fully justified, however, depends on what one asks of an opening. In the Caro-Kann, Black usually secures a position free of obvious weakness, with easy development for his pieces, but only at the cost of conceding advantage in space to White. For this reason, although White can hope in general for only a small advantage, such gains as he succeeds in making tend to persist for a long time.

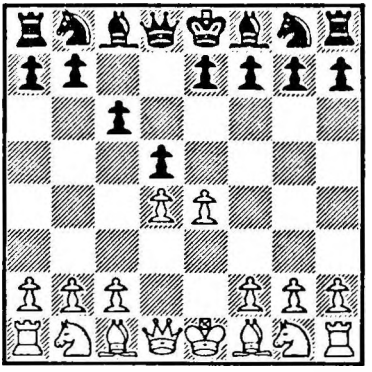
2 P–Q4

As in the French Defence, White can also play 2 P–Q3, but Black has even more choice here. One sound method is 2 . . . P–Q4 3 N–Q2 P–KN3 4 KN–B3 B–N2 5 P–KN3 P–K4 6 B–N2 N–K2 7 O–O O–O and Black completes his development smoothly.

Another plan for White is quick piece play with 2 N–QB3

P–Q4 3 N–B3 but after 3 . . . B–N5 4 P–KR3 B × N 5 Q × B N–B3 6 P–Q3 P–K3 Black's position is hard to attack; with his bishop exchanged, the white-square pawn structure has no defects or cramping effect.

2 . . . P–Q4



As in the French Defence Black has struck back in the centre and White must do something about his attacked KP. Though the choices are similar to those in the French, their consequences are totally changed, the main difference being that the black QB is on longer restricted by its own pawns. 3 P–K5 is less attractive now because it no longer has much cramping effect; after 3 . . . B–B4 (3 . . . P–QB4 is also good despite the apparent loss of time) 4 P–QB4 (4 N–K2 P–K3 or 4 P–KR4!? P–KR4 give Black no problems either) 4 . . . P–K3 5 N–QB3 N–Q2 Black has no difficulties; after 6 P × P BP × P he brings the KN via K2 to QB3, while otherwise the knight comes to Q4 after . . . P × P. In any case Black completes his development with . . . B–K2 with a perfectly satisfactory game.

3 N–QB3

3 N–Q2 P × P 4 N × P leads to the same position. Some players prefer 3 N–Q2 in the belief that after 3 N–QB3 P–KN3?! White's position is less flexible than with the knight on Q2 (he can play P–K5 and defend the centre with P–QB3

in the latter case). Since Caro-Kann players rarely stoop to such moves as 3 . . . P–KN3, this point seems rather academic.

3 P × P has more bite here than in the French Defence. After 3 . . . P × P the pawn structure has lost its symmetry and White has far more to play for. There are two possible ways to handle this exchange variation:

(a) 4 B–Q3 N–QB3 5 P–QB3 N–B3 (5 . . . Q–B2 is another sound move; 6 N–B3 B–N5 or 6 N–K2 P–K3 7 B–KB4 B–Q3 both lead to minor-piece exchanges which help Black's road to equality) 6 B–KB4 B–N5 7 Q–N3 Q–B1 8 N–Q2 P–K3 9 KN–B3 B–K2 and White can hope for no more than a slight initiative with 10 N–K5 N × N 11 B × N.

(b) 4 P–QB4 is the Panov Attack: 4 . . . N–KB3 5 N–QB3 and now, since 5 . . . P × P 6 B × P gives White too easy an attacking position, Black has three main choices:

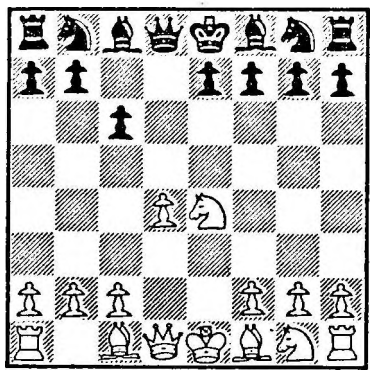
(b1) 5 . . . P–KN3 6 Q–N3 B–N2 7 P × P O–O is a pawn sacrifice, hoping that the doubled white QPs will become vulnerable. After 8 KN–K2 QN–Q2 9 P–N3 N–N3 10 B–N2 B–B4 11 O–O Q–Q2 (11 . . . B–Q6 is met by 12 P–Q6) 12 P–QR4 B–Q6 13 P–Q6 P × P 14 P–R5 B–B5 15 Q–N4 B × N 16 N × B QN–Q4 17 Q–N3 White retains a small advantage. This is typical of such lines where White must carefully choose the right moment to return his pawn with P–Q6.

(b2) 5 . . . N–B3 can lead to great complications after either 6 N–B3 B–N5 7 P × P KN × P 8 Q–N3 B × N 9 P × B P–K3 10 Q × NP N × P 11 B–N5 ch N × B 12 Q–B6 ch! K–K2 13 Q × N(N5) Q–Q2 which should be satisfactory for Black; or 6 B–N5 Q–R4!? (6 . . . P–K3 is safer since 7 P × P P × P 8 B × N Q × B 9 N × P Q–Q1 gets White nowhere) 7 B × N (7 Q–Q2 P–K4!? is equally wild) 7 . . . KP × B 8 P × P B–QN5 9 Q–Q2 B × N 10 P × B Q × QP 11 N–K2 O–O 12 N–B4 when White preserves some advantage.

(b3) 5 . . . P–K3 is the soundest course, leading the game into positions characteristic of the Queen's Gambit. After 6 N–B3 B–K2 7 P × P N × P (7 . . . P × P 8 B–N5 ch is less com-

fortable for Black; 8 . . . N–B3 9 B × N ch P × B 10 N–K5 leaves White with pressure) 8 B–Q3 N–QB3 9 O–O O–O 10 R–K1 B–B3 Black prepares a solid defensive formation with P–KN3 and B–N2 while hoping to gain pressure against the isolated QP. Nevertheless, after 11 B–K4 N(B3)–K2 12 Q–B2 P–KN3 13 B–KR6 B–N2 14 B × B K × B 15 P–KR4 Black remains on the defensive.

3 . . . P × P
4 N × P



In comparison with the similar French Defence line, Black no longer has the problem of developing his QB. For this reason the pawn exchange at move 3 is fully justified.

4 . . . B–B4

This is the most natural move, immediately developing the problem piece, but there are three major alternative plans:
(a) 4 . . . N–Q2 is a quiet system, aiming primarily to avoid weaknesses. After 5 N–KB3 (5 B–QB4 KN–B3 6 N–N5 P–K3 7 Q–K2 N–N3 8 B–Q3 P–KR3 9 N(5)–B3 is a more complex attacking line) 5 . . . KN–B3 6 N × N ch N × N 7 N–K5 Black does not find it easy to finish his development; 7 . . . B–B4 is met by 8 P–QB3 when 8 . . . P–K3? allows 9 P–KN4 B–N3 10 P–KR4 B–Q3 11 Q–K2 causing great embarrassment to the Black minor pieces.

(b) 4 . . . N–B3 5 N × N ch KP × N is an unusual system. Black 'sacrifices' pawn structure to obtain free lines for development. While the opening and middle games hold no fears for Black, he will always have difficulties in the end-games resulting from this line. White can create a passed QP while Black has no equivalent hopes from his crippled pawns on the K-side. Nevertheless, end-games are a long way off and White must take care not to press too soon with his pawn majority, thereby losing control of squares on the K-file. A typical continuation is 6 B–QB4 N–Q2 7 N–K2 B–Q3 8 O–O O–O 9 B–B4 N–N3 10 B–Q3 B–K3 11 P–QB3 N–Q4 12 B × B Q × B with White a little better.

(c) 4 . . . N–B3 5 N × N ch NP × N is a more dynamic system; Black hopes to control the centre with his pawns and create K-side attacking chances. The main problem for Black is a potential White breakthrough with P–Q5 which can have great disruptive effect. One possible continuation is 6 B–K2 B–B4 7 N–B3 P–K3 8 O–O N–Q2 9 P–B4 Q–B2 10 P–Q5 O–O–O 11 P × BP (11 N–Q4 B–N3 12 P × KP N–K4 is good for Black) 11 . . . P × P 12 B–K3 B–B4 and the weaknesses round the black king are not easily exploited.

5 N–N3

5 N–B5 is a neglected alternative; Black can play simply with 5 . . . P–QN3 6 N–N3 P–K3 7 N–B3 N–Q2 or delve in the complications of 5 . . . P–K4 6 N × P Q–K2 (6 . . . Q–N3 7 N–B5 P × P 8 N–N3 is more difficult for Black) 7 N–R5 P × P ch 8 B–K2 Q–N5 ch 9 B–Q2 Q × P.

5 . . . B–N3

6 P–KR4

The beginning of White's space-gaining manoeuvres on the K-side. The results seem more enduring than those obtained by pure piece play such as 6 N–B3 N–Q2 7 B–Q3 P–K3 or 6 B–QB4 P–K3 7 KN–K2 N–B3 8 N–B4 B–Q3. After such continuations White's early initiative usually fades, leaving him with nothing but an equal position.

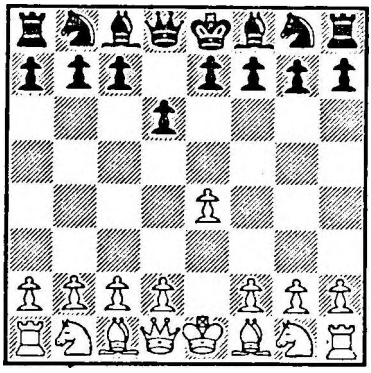
6 . . . P–KR3

Black must do something about the threat of P–R5. Now White's most effective procedure is to prepare long castling, and exchange the active black bishop, so the game usually continues 7 **N–B3 N–Q2** 8 **P–R5 B–R2** 9 **B–Q3 B × B** 10 **Q × B Q–B2** 11 **B–Q2 P–K3** when White must decide how best to utilize his space advantage. There are two main plans, both ultimately based on the idea of establishing a knight on K5:

(a) 12 **Q–K2 KN–B3** 13 **O–O–O O–O–O** 14 **N–K5** when 14 . . . N–N3 is better than conceding more space with 14 . . . N × N 15 P × N N–Q2 16 P–KB4 B–K2 17 N–K4.

(b) 12 **O–O–O O–O–O** 13 **N–K4** recentralizes the knight which was doing little on KN3 and prepares P–KN3 and B–KB4 to fight for the KR2–QN8 diagonal. Black continues 13 . . . KN–B3 14 P–KN3 (after 14 P–B4 Black fights back with 14 . . . P–B4 and White's space-gaining hopes are not realized) 14 . . . N × N 15 Q × N and now the right course is patient development with 15 . . . B–K2 16 K–N1 KR–K1 17 P–B4 P–QB4 when White finds it hard to preserve any advantage. A good example of less accurate Black play is the game Tal–Hübner, Montreal, 1979, where instead of 15 . . . B–K2, Black played 15 . . . N–B3 16 Q–K2 P–B4. The remainder of the game was very instructive: 17 P × P B × P 18 R–R4! (now the threat of P–QN4 and R–QB4 is difficult to meet; a good illustration of why Black ought to delay . . . P–QB4 until after White has played the same move) 18 . . . K–N1 19 B–B4 B–Q3 20 R × B! R × R 21 N–K5! K–R1 22 N–B4 N–K1 23 R–N4! Q–K2 24 N × R N × N 25 R × P and White won easily with his extra pawn. A nice lesson that even the peaceful waters of the Caro-Kann contain potentially fatal dangers.

THE PIRC DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 P–Q3



Unlike all the previous defences to 1 P–K4 which we have so far encountered, the Pirc involves no immediate Black central occupation. White is allowed his 'ideal' centre of pawns on K4 and Q4, with Black relying on restraint, quick development and a later strike back. Black's development scheme is based on a K-side fianchetto, N–KB3 and O–O, with an eventual P–K4 or P–QB4 depending on the formation chosen by his opponent.

2 P–Q4 N–KB3

Also playable is 2 . . . P–KN3, delaying the development of the knight and inviting White to transpose to the realms of 1 P–Q4 openings with 3 P–QB4. Generally after 2 . . . P–KN3 3 N–QB3 B–N2 Black quickly plays N–KB3 anyway, leading back to lines discussed below.

3 N–QB3 P–KN3

White must now decide what piece formation to adopt, and particularly how ambitious he ought to become early in the game. The most aggressive systems for White involve an early P–KB4, discouraging Black's P–K4 and hoping for a massive central push of white pawns. Other plans aim for a more enduring, if smaller advantage, by holding the centre and relying on superior mobility and cramping tactics. Black must

keep a careful eye on the white centre, not allowing its dangerous expansion, while planning himself either to attack with pawns in the centre, or advance on the Q-side with P–B3 and P–QN4. The examples which follow illustrate some of the typical continuations:

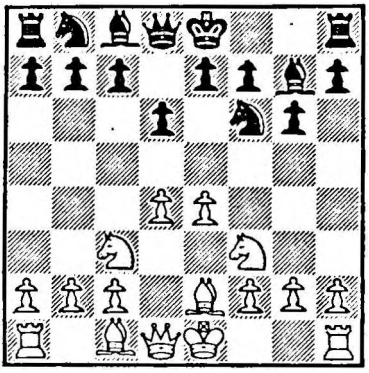
(a) 4 **P–B4** is the most overtly aggressive formation; White plans to dominate the centre and launch a quick attack with P–K5. There can follow 4 . . . B–N2 5 N–B3 O–O (after 5 . . . P–B4 6 P × P Q–R4 7 B–Q3 Q × BP 8 Q–K2 a Sicilian Defence-type of position is reached, but Black must also be ready for the complications of 6 B–N5 ch B–Q2 7 P–K5!?) 6 B–Q3 (6 P–K5 P × P 7 BP × P N–Q4 8 B–QB4 B–K3 is satisfactory for Black) 6 . . . N–B3 (6 . . . N–R3 is also possible, meeting 7 P–K5 with 7 . . . N–Q2 8 N–K4 P–B4 and 7 O–O with 7 . . . P–B4 8 P–Q5 R–N1 giving Black counterplay in either case) 7 O–O when, despite White's imposing centre, Black is not without activity. The main choice now lies between 7 . . . B–N5 8 P–K5! P × P 9 QP × P N–Q4 10 P–KR3 N × N 11 P × N B–K3 and 7 . . . P–K4!? QP × P (8 BP × P P × P 9 P–Q5 N–Q5 is another complex possibility) 8 . . . P × P 9 P–B5 P × P 10 P × P P–K5! 11 N × P B × P 12 N × N ch Q × N. Black has to be willing to live dangerously in these lines, or he can easily find himself in a hopelessly passive end-game.

(b) 4 **P–B3** is another attacking system, intending B–K3, Q–Q2 and O–O–O. Incautious play by Black can give White the type of automatic K-side onslaught well known in the Dragon Sicilian. Quick action by Black here, however, can deny White his attack: 4 . . . P–B3 5 B–K3 QN–Q2 6 Q–Q2 P–QN4 7 O–O–O Q–R4 8 K–N1 B–KN2 with a perfectly satisfactory game for Black, who still maintains the option of castling on either wing.

(c) 4 **N–B3 B–N2** 5 **B–QB4** is a straightforward developing scheme, though the vulnerability of the bishop on QB4 gives Black a target: 5 . . . P–B3! 6 B–N3 (neither 6 P–K5 P × P 7 N × P O–O nor 6 Q–K2 O–O 7 P–K5 N–Q4 gives White

any advantage) 6 . . . O–O (6 . . . P–Q4 is also good; after 7 P–K5 KN–Q2 Black regroups his knight via KB1 and K3, leaving the white bishop shut out on N3) 7 Q–K2 B–N5 with an easy game for Black; after exchanging bishop for knight he can continue with P–K3 and P–Q4.

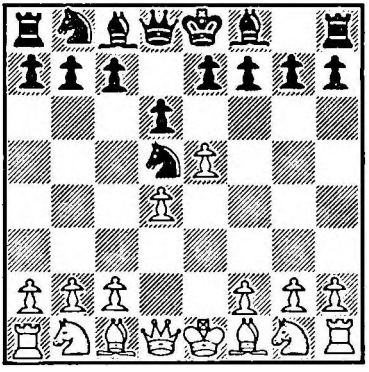
(d) **4 N–B3 B–N2 5 B–K2** is a modest plan, but currently the most popular for White.



Black is given no object of attack, so must quietly continue his development, keeping a clear eye on the centre and preparing to claim more space. After 5 . . . O–O 6 O–O a typical continuation is 6 . . . B–N5 (after 6 . . . P–B3 7 P–KR3 QN–Q2 8 P–K5 N–K1 9 R–K1 Black finds it difficult to free his game) 7 B–K3 N–B3 8 Q–Q2 (Black can afford the lost time after 8 P–Q5 N–N1; he hits back in the centre with P–QB3 and creates Q-side activity) 8 . . . P–K4. Black at last stakes his claim to central space. There can follow 9 P–Q5 (9 P × P P × P 10 KR–Q1 gives White chances of no more than a minuscule end-game edge) 9 . . . N–K2 10 QR–Q1. Black is prevented from playing P–QB3, so White maintains his advantage in space. Nevertheless, Black can stay active with 10 . . . B–Q2 11 N–K1 (11 P–KR3 P–QN4! seizes the initiative for Black) 11 . . . N–N5 12 B × N B × B 13 P–B3 B–Q2 14 P–B4 B–N5 15 N–B3 P–KB4 and Black is fighting back.

ALEKHINE'S DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 N–KB3

This was the first of the 'hypermodern' defences to 1 P–K4. The conventional attitude of central occupation with pawns is turned on its head. White's central pawns are encouraged to advance, gaining time by attacking the knight. Black's claim is that these pawns will be an object of attack. The normal continuation is 2 **P–K5 N–Q4** 3 **P–Q4 P–Q3** but now White must decide just how much of the centre he ought to grab.



The sharpest system is the **Four Pawns' Attack,** 4 **P–QB4 N–N3** 5 **P–B4**, but Black's resources against the rampant white pawns appear quite sufficient: 5 . . . P × P 6 BP × P N–B3 7 B–K3 B–B4 8 N–QB3 P–K3 9 N–B3 B–K2 10 P–Q5!? (10 B–K2 O–O 11 O–O P–B3 gives Black fully adequate play against the centre) 10 . . . N–N5. The position is now atrociously complicated, but Black comes out of the mess not badly; the two main lines of analysis are as follows:
(a) 11 R–B1 P × P 12 P–QR3 P–B4! 13 P × N P–Q5 14 B × P P × B 15 N × P B–N3 16 P–B5 O–O! 17 P × N B × P with a huge attack for the piece.
(b) 11 N–Q4 B–N3 12 P–QR3 P–QB4! 13 N × P P × N 14 P × N BP × P 15 N–R4 O–O 16 N × N P × N 17 R × R Q × R 18 P–Q6 B–Q1 19 B–K2 Q–R7 20 B–Q4 P–N4!?

21 P × P Q–Q4 and Black keeps a troublesome initiative. Such prospects of counterplay for Black have made the Four Pawns' Attack relatively unpopular in recent years, but it remains, as always, a theoretically crucial line against the Alekhine.

From the diagram position, therefore, White tends to play more quietly.

4 N–KB3

This is the Modern Variation. 4 P–QB4 N–N3 5 P × P is a compromise between rash pawn advances and quick piece development, but appears to give White no advantage. After 5 . . . BP × P 6 N–QB3 P–N3 7 B–Q3 B–N2 8 KN–K2 N–B3 9 B–K3 O–O 10 O–O B–N5 Black has good play; 11 P–B3 B–B4 12 B × B allows 12 . . . N × BP! while 11 P–KR3 B × N 12 N × B N–N5 gives Black an easy game.

4 . . . B–N5

Other moves put too little pressure on the centre. After, for example, 4 . . . P–KN3 White secures an easy advantage with 5 B–QB4 P–QB3 (or 5 . . . N–N3 6 B–N3 B–N2 7 N–N5 P–Q4 ? P–KB4 with a firm central wedge) 6 O–O B–N2 7 P × P Q × P 8 R–K1 O–O 9 B–KN5 and Black finds it hard to contest White's advantage in space.

5 B–K2 P–K3

6 O–O B–K2

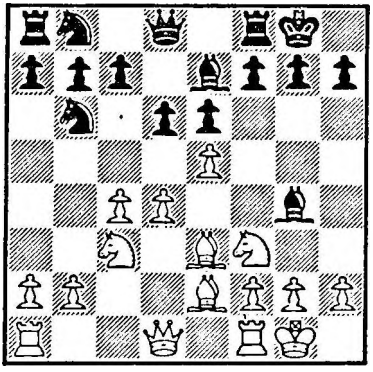
After 6 . . . P × P 7 N × P! B × B 8 Q × B White keeps his advantage and Black can hardly create counterplay. Instead, 6 . . . P × P 7 P × P would be a mistake since 7 . . . B × N 8 B × B N–QB3 gives Black easy development and leaves the white K-pawn a target. The attempt to reach this position by first capturing the knight: 6 . . . B × N 7 B × B P × P fails because of 8 P–B4! with B × P to follow.

7 P–B4

The right moment to kick the knight away, enabling White to play N–B3.

7 . . . N–N3
8 N–B3 O–O
9 B–K3

9 P × P P × P 10 B–K3 is also possible, meeting 10 . . . N–B3 with 11 P–Q5 or 10 . . . P–Q4 with 11 P–B5 B × N 12 B × B N–B5 13 B–B4 with chances of advantage in either case.



Black must still find some means to create activity in the face of the white centre. Experience shows that his task is not easy. 9 . . . P × P 10 N × P favours White, as does 9 . . . N–B3 10 P × P P × P 11 P–Q5! Closing the centre with 9 . . . P–Q4 also has its drawbacks: 10 P–B5 B × N 11 P × B! N–B1 12 P–N4 P–KB3 13 P–B4 and Black is permanently cramped. Perhaps the best policy is to wait and see with 9 . . . QN–Q2 but White's game is still preferable after 10 P × P P × P 11 P–QN3.

THE SCANDINAVIAN DEFENCE (OR CENTRE COUNTER): 1 P–K4 P–Q4

We have seen an example of this opening on page 16 where Black played the time-wasting 2 P × P Q × P 3 N–QB3 Q–QR4. The modern line is less unprincipled: Black meets **2 P × P with 2 . . . N–KB3,** though this too does not seem

sufficient to equalize; however White cannot try for too much. Some examples:

(a) 3 P–QB4 P–B3! leads to a Caro-Kann after 4 P–Q4! P × P. White ought not risk 4 P × P!? N × P giving Black fine play for the pawn.

(b) 3 B–N5 ch B–Q2 4 B–B4 is the other way to attempt to keep the pawn, but after 4 . . . B–N5 5 P–KB3 B–B4 (5 . . . B–B1 is also good) 6 P–KN4 B–B1 7 N–B3 P–B3!? 8 P × P N × P Black again has an attractive game.

(c) 3 P–Q4 N × P 4 N–KB3 is analogous to the Modern Variation of Alekhine's Defence; White keeps his space advantage and gets on with development, keeping in reserve the move P–QB4. Note that the immediate 4 P–QB4 N–N3 5 N–QB3 (5 N–KB3 is still correct) gives Black the chance of 5 . . . P–K4! with a fine game after 6 P × P Q × Q ch 7 K × Q N–B3. After 4 N–KB3 Black has difficulties creating any active play. For example 4 . . . P–KN3 5 B–K2 (also the aggressive plan 5 P–KR3 B–N2 6 P–B4 N–N3 7 N–B3 O–O 8 B–K3 N–B3 9 Q–Q2 P–K4 10 P–Q5 N–K2 11 P–KN4! creates problems for Black) 5 . . . B–N2 6 O–O O–O 7 R–K1 N–QB3 8 P–B3 and Black is left cramped.

THE NIMZOWITSCH DEFENCE: 1 P–K4 N–QB3

This was one of the great man's less successful ideas. After 2 **P–Q4** Black can strike in the centre with either . . . P–K4 or . . . P–Q4, but neither is convincing:

(a) 2 . . . P–K4 3 P × P N × P 4 N–KB3 Q–B3 5 N × N Q × N 6 B–Q3 with a freer game for White.

(b) 2 . . . P–Q4 3 N–QB3 (after 3 P–K5 B–B4 Black's ability to develop this bishop is worth more than his temporary problems in advancing the QBP to attack the centre) 3 . . . P × P 4 P–Q5 N–K4 5 B–KB4 (or 5 Q–Q4 N–N3 6 Q × KP) N–N3 6 B–N3 P–QR3 (6 . . . P–K3 is met by 7 B–N5 ch

B–Q2 8 P × P) 7 B–QB4 N–B3 8 Q–K2 B–B4 9 O–O–O and Black has great problems completing his development.

Any would-be Nimzowitsch Defence players should also note that after 2 N–KB3 Black has nothing better than 2 . . . P–K4 leading straight back to normal K-pawn openings. Persevering with arcane continuations courts trouble: 2 . . . P–K3 3 P–Q4 P–Q4 4 P–K5 just gives White an improved French Defence position, while 2 . . . P–Q3 3 P–Q4 B–N5 4 B–N5 is another murky backwater unsuitable for fishing.

An example of what to avoid in the French Defence rounds off this chapter:

WHITE: STEINITZ BLACK: SHOWALTER
(Vienna, 1898)

1 P–K4 P–K3 2 **P–Q4 P–Q4** 3 **P–K5 P–QB4** 4 **P × P N–QB3** 5 **N–KB3 B × P** 6 **B–Q3 KN–K2** 7 **O–O N–N3** 8 **R–K1 B–Q2** 9 **P–B3 P–QR4?**

Black should not waste time on this weakening move. Instead, 9 . . . B–N3 followed by B–B2 gets on with the task of attacking the white KP.

10 **P–QR4 Q–N1** 11 **Q–K2 B–N3** 12 **N–R3! O–O**

Black realizes that he has mishandled matters. 12 . . . B–B2 would have been met by 13 N–QN5! when 13 . . . B × P? loses a piece to 14 B × N. Note that after the correct 9 . . . B–N3 10 N–R3 Black can reply 10 . . . P–QR3!

13 **N–QN5 N–R2** 14 **B–K3! B × B** 15 **Q × B N × N** 16 **P × N P–N3** 17 **N–Q4 P–B4** 18 **P–KB4**

White has a huge strategic advantage thanks to his unassailable knight on Q4 and Black's impotent bishop. Now he must organize his forces to tie Black down further on the K-side.

18 . . . **N–K2** 19 **Q–B2 Q–Q1** 20 **R–K3 P–N3** 21 **R–KR3 R–B2** 22 **K–R1 K–N2** 23 **N–B3 P–R3** 24 **R–KN1!**

White begins his attack; the threat is 25 P–KN4.

24 . . . P–R4 25 **Q–N3 Q–R1** 26 **N–N5 KR–B1** 27 **Q–R4! N–N1**

Avoiding the threatened 28 N × P ch, but now Black's pieces are so constricted that White is ready for the decisive breakthrough.

28 **P–B4! P × P** 29 **B × QBP KR–K1** 30 **R–Q3 R–R2** 31 **R–Q6**

Black can no longer avert material loss. The rest is easy.

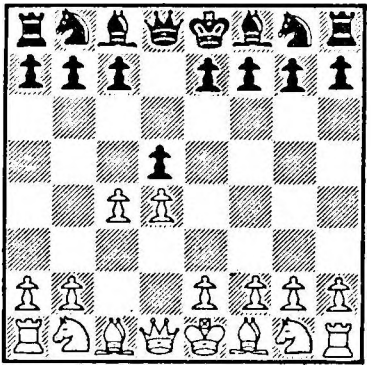
31 **. . . R–N2** 32 **R(1)–Q1 B–B1** 33 **N × P ch B × N** 34 **B × B Q–R2** 35 **R–Q7 ch R–K2** 36 **R × R ch N × R** 37 **Q–B6 ch K–R3** 38 **R–Q8 R–B2** 39 **P–R3 Resigns.**

CHAPTER 7

The Queen's Gambit

As we have seen, the openings with 1 P–K4 can lead to very sharp tactical variations early in the game. Even the Ruy Lopez, with its deep strategic ideas, can produce unfathomable complications in some lines. In general the Queen's Pawn openings are quieter in the early stages, with the emphasis on securing favourable pawn structures and gaining space. In the early stages of the game the pace of life after 1 P–Q4 is, on the whole, slower than after 1 P–K4. As we shall see, however, the resulting positions are certainly no less complex and offer equally great chances for either side to win or lose the game.

As with the King's Pawn openings, Black has the immediate choice: to respond symmetrically or to vary immediately. In this chapter we shall deal with openings beginning 1 P–Q4 P–Q4, in particular the Queen's Gambit, 2 P–QB4, and the replies 2 . . . P × P, 2 . . . P–K3 and 2 . . . P–QB3. Other second moves for Black will be discussed at the end of the chapter.



With the moves 1 **P–Q4 P–Q4** 2 **P–QB4**, White announces his intention to claim central space. In comparison with the King's Gambit, White takes considerably less risk. As we shall see, Black cannot capture and hold the gambit pawn. On his second move, Black has three possibilities: 2 . . . P × P, the Queen's Gambit Accepted, opens the centre and leads to fluid piece play; 2 . . . P–K3, the Orthodox Defence, stands firm in the centre, accepting a slightly cramped game for the sake of security and the promise of later freedom; and 2 . . . P–QB3, the Slav Defence, also temporarily holding ground in the centre, while keeping open the option of developing the QB outside the pawn chain.

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED: 2 . . . P × P

Black cedes ground in the centre, exchanging his QP for the white QBP, with the intention of re-establishing equilibrium by means of a later . . . P–QB4.

3 N–KB3

Other third moves allow Black instant freedom with 3 . . . P–K4, for example:

(a) 3 N–QB3 P–K4! 4 P × P (4 P–Q5 P–QR3 5 P–K4 P–QN4 favours Black) Q × Q ch 5 K × Q B–K3 with a fine position for Black. White does best in this line to head for equality at move 4 with 4 N–B3 P × P 5 Q × P Q × Q 6 N × Q P–QR3, though, of course, this gives Black not the slightest problem.

(b) 3 P–K4 P–K4 (3 . . . N–KB3!? also poses White problems to keep his centre mobile) 4 N–KB3 B–N5 ch (4 . . . P × P 5 B × P is equally playable for Black, but he must take care not to allow a quick attack as in the Giuoco Piano with Q–N3 and N–KN5) 5 B–Q2 B × B ch 6 QN × B P × P 7 B × P and now safest is 7 . . . N–KR3 8 N–N3 O–O avoiding the problems Black must face after 7 . . . P–QB4? 8 Q–R4 ch!

N–B3 9 N–K5, or 7 . . . N–QB3 8 O–O KN–K2 9 N–N5!? N–K4 10 B–N3 P–KR3 11 P–B4. While giving White immediate fluid attacking chances, 3 P–K4 seems to dissipate the tension too early for White to hope for an enduring advantage.

3 . . . N–KB3

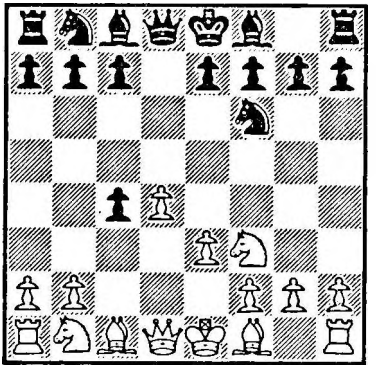
Black in turn prevents White's P–K4. Note that the attempt to maintain the gambit pawn with 3 . . . P–QN4? is doomed to failure: 4 P–QR4 P–QB3 5 P–K3 Q–N3 (or 5 . . . P–K3 6 P × P P × P 7 P–QN3 B–N5 ch 8 B–Q2 B × B ch 9 KN × B) 6 P × P P × P 7 P–QN3 P × P 8 Q × P and 8 . . . P–N5 loses to 9 Q–Q5 B–N2 10 B–N5 ch B–B3 11 N–K5 Q × B 12 Q × P ch. So in all cases White regains his pawn, keeping a big advantage in the centre.

4 P–K3

This is the most natural way for White to regain his pawn; after B × P he will have the central pawn majority which the Queen's Gambit seeks to establish. There are two other moves, however, with somewhat more ambitious plans. First, 4 Q–R4 ch regains the pawn immediately and plans development of the bishop on KN2. The early queen development, however, gives Black chances of early activity and easy equality: 4 . . . P–B3 (4 . . . N–B3 is also good, meeting 5 Q × BP with 5 . . . B–K3 or 5 N–B3 with 5 . . . N–Q4!) 5 Q × BP B–N5 6 QN–Q2 (6 N–K5 B–K3 is fine for Black) 6 . . . QN–Q2 7 P–KN3 Q–R4 8 B–N2 P–K4 9 O–O P–K5 10 N–K5 B–K3 and Black equalizes without difficulty.

Much sharper is the developing move 4 N–B3 intending to dominate the centre with 5 P–K4. This turns the opening into a genuine gambit since Black can secure his pawn with 4 . . . P–QR3 (less accurate is 4 . . . P–B4 5 P–Q5 P–K3 giving White a fine attack by 6 P–K4 P × P 7 P–K5!) 5 P–K4 P–QN4. There can follow 6 P–K5 N–Q4 7 P–QR4 N × N 8 P × N B–N2 (or 8 . . . Q–Q4 9 P–N3 B–B4 10 B–N2 P–K3 11 O–O Q–N2) 9 P–K6! P × P (9 . . . P–B3 is also possible; after 10 P–N3 Q–Q4 11 B–N2 Q × P ch 12 B–K3

White has a dangerous development lead for his pawns) 10 B–K2 Q–Q4 11 N–N5 Q × NP 12 R–KB1 and White has excellent attacking prospects for the pawns.



4 . . . P–K3

4 . . . P–QN4? is still weak; after 5 P–QR4 P–B3 6 P × P P × P 7 P–QN3 White regains his pawn with clear advantage. The main alternative to 4 . . . P–K3 is to develop the bishop outside the pawn chain with 4 . . . B–N5. This is, however, not as attractive as it might seem since the bishop is poorly placed on N5 in conjunction with the normal plan of . . . P–QB4. After 4 . . . B–N5 5 B × P P–K3 6 P–KR3 B–R4 7 N–B3 (7 Q–N3 B × N 8 P × B QN–Q2! 9 Q × P P–B4 gives Black excellent play for the pawn) 7 . . . QN–Q2 8 O–O B–Q3 9 P–K4 P–K4 10 P × P QN × P 11 B–K2 White preserves a small advantage thanks to the attacking possibilities given by his majority of pawns on the K-side.

5 B × P P–B4

6 O–O P–QR3!

A very useful move, intending to expand on the Q-side with P–QN4 and develop the bishop on QN2. Instead, the routine exchange 6 . . . P × P 7 P × P gives Black a difficult life; the isolated white pawn can be an attacking asset. For example

7 . . . N–B3 8 N–B3 B–K2 9 B–K3 O–O 10 N–K5 and Black is passively placed.

7 P–QR4

7 Q–K2 P–QN4 8 B–N3 is a sharp alternative demanding precise play from Black: 8 . . . B–N2 (8 . . . N–B3 9 N–B3 B–N2 10 R–Q1 Q–B2 11 P–Q5! P × P 12 P–K4! is a typically dangerous attacking line for White) 9 R–Q1 QN–Q2 10 N–B3 (10 P–K4 is tricky since neither 10 . . . N × P 11 P–Q5 nor 10 . . . B × P 11 N–N5 is at all safe for Black; but 10 . . . P × P! 11 N × P Q–N1! 12 N–QB3 B–Q3 takes the sting out of White's attack) 10 . . . Q–B2 11 P–K4 (11 P–Q5 N × P only leads to exchanges and equality) 11 . . . P × P 12 N × QP B–B4 13 B–N5 O–O 14 QR–B1 Q–N3 and Black stays active and maintains equal chances.

7 . . . N–B3

With the white pawn on QR4, this knight is now beckoned towards the attractive N5 square.

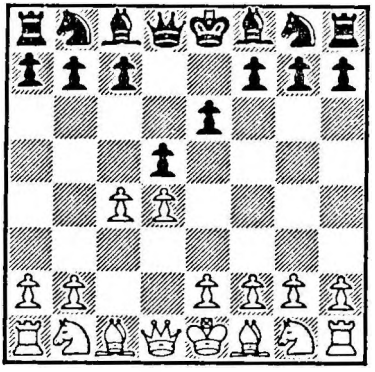
8 Q–K2 P × P

9 R–Q1

White regains the pawn and reaches a typical isolated queen's pawn attacking position. After 9 . . . B–K2 10 P × P O–O 11 N–B3 N–Q4 the pawn is well blockaded, but Black will have to endure a period of defence on the K-side before he can hope to take advantage of its potential weakness. After 12 B–Q3 QN–N5 13 B–N1 P–QN3 14 Q–K4 P–N3 15 B–R6 R–K1 chances are about equal.

As may be seen from many of the above lines, the Queen's Gambit Accepted can become very lively indeed, despite its apparent tendency to symmetry and simplification. The drawish reputation of this opening is far from justified.

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED: 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3



Black defends his QP and announces his intention to continue with solid development. Eventually he will have to solve the problem of developing his Q-bishop, and the various solutions to this question can give quite different characters to the variations which follow. Our main line is the so-called **Orthodox Defence,** characterized by straightforward Black development.

3 N–QB3 N–KB3

One of Black's characteristic freeing moves in the Queen's Gambit is . . . P–QB4, but playing it early always carries concomitant disadvantages. Here 3 . . . P–QB4 is the Tarrasch Defence, where Black accepts an isolated queen's pawn in return for free piece play. We shall return to this later.

4 B–N5

The most aggressive square for this bishop. After 4 N–B3 B–K2 5 B–B4 O–O 6 P–K3 Black has the choice between the solid 6 . . . P–B3 and the immediate freeing attempt 6 . . . P–B4 7 QP × P B × P. Putting the bishop on KN5 denies Black the freedom of this latter line, owing to the pressure against his QP.

4 P × P is the main alternative to the text move. This leads to the Exchange Variation, which we come to later.

4 . . . B–K2

Unpinning and defending against the threat of 5 P × P P × P 6 B × N winning a pawn or wrecking the K-side pawns. 4 . . . QN–Q2 is another possibility, since 5 P × P P × P 6 N × P? is surprisingly met by 6 . . . N × N! 7 B × Q B–N5 ch winning a piece for Black. We shall see the possibilities after 4 . . . QN–Q2 when discussing the Cambridge Springs Defence later.

5 P–K3

White must be ready to develop his K-side quickly. 5 N–B3 O–O 6 Q–B2 is an aggressive try, intending long castling, but Black equalizes easily with 6 . . . P–B4! 7 QP × P P × P 8 P–K4 Q–R4 9 P–K5 N–Q4. An early Q–B2 by White can usually be met by P–QB4; with the white queen off the Q-file, there is no longer the worry of pressure against the black QP.

5 . . . O–O

6 N–B3 QN–Q2

We shall come later to Black's principal alternatives: 6 . . . P–KR3 7 B–R4 P–QN3 (Tartakower's Defence) and 6 . . . P–KR3 7 B–R4 N–K5 (Lasker's Defence).

7 R–B1

After 7 B–Q3, Black frees his game with 7 . . . P × P 8 B × P P–B4. Therefore White waits, to avoid losing a move with the bishop. As usual 7 Q–B2 is well met by 7 . . . P–B4 when neither 8 O–O–O Q–R4 nor 8 P × QP N × P 9 B × B Q × B gives White any advantage. In the latter variation after 10 N × N P × N 11 P × P N × P 12 B–K2 B–N5 13 N–Q4 N–K3! the activity of Black's pieces fully compensates for any apparent weakness of the isolated pawn.

7 . . . P–B3

Attempting to develop the bishop by means of 7 . . . P–QN3 works well after 8 B–Q3 B–N2 9 O–O P–B4, but White can

cut across this plan with 8 P × P! P × P (8 . . . N × P? loses a pawn to 9 N × N P × N 10 B × B Q × B 11 R × P) and the long diagonal no longer looks so attractive for the bishop. The famous game Pillsbury–Wolf, Monte Carlo, 1903, shows an effective White attacking procedure in such a position: 9 N–K5 B–N2 10 P–B4 P–QR3 11 B–Q3 P–B4 12 O–O P–B5 13 B–B5 P–N4 14 R–B3 R–K1 15 R–R3 P–N3 16 B–N1 N × N 17 BP × N N–Q2 18 B × B R × B 19 Q–B3 N–B1 20 R–B1 Q–Q2 21 Q–B6 P–N5 22 N–R4 Q–B2 23 N–B5 B–B1 24 R–R6 P–R4 25 R–B4 R–N1 26 B × P! R–N3 (26 . . . N × B loses to 27 R × N ch! RP × R 28 R–R4) 27 Q × R(N6)! N × B 28 Q–KB6 R–K1 29 R–B1 B–K3 30 Q–N5 K–R1 31 Q–R5 N–B1 32 N × B R × N 33 R × R Resigns. A characteristic White attack in a Queen's Gambit handled too passively by Black.

8 B–Q3

Since Black's freeing . . . P–QB4 will now involve loss of time, White is happy to develop his bishop without worrying about . . . P × P. 8 Q–B2 is also possible, still waiting for . . . P × P, but Black can free his game another way with 8 . . . N–K5! 9 B × B Q × B 10 N × N P × N 11 Q × P Q–N5 ch with equal chances.

8 . . . P × P

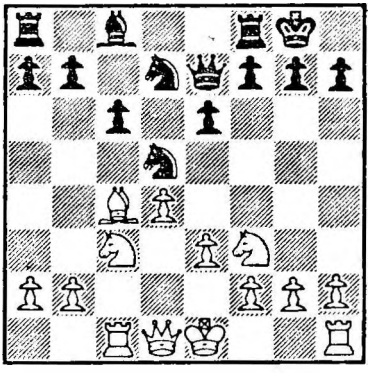
This looks inconsistent, since Black's play to this point has been concerned mainly with supporting the QP. The exchange, however, is the beginning of 'Capablanca's freeing manoeuvre' designed to solve his development problems. Instead, 8 . . . P–KR3 9 B–R4 P × P 10 B × P P–QN4 is an active alternative, though 11 B–Q3 P–R3 12 P–R4 preserves White's initiative. Note that 11 P–K4? here would allow 11 . . . N × P! which is the reason for interpolating 8 . . . P–KR3. As we shall see, the Capablanca manoeuvre is best played with the white bishop still on N5. Black must, of course, do something active in the present position, before White can castle and quickly

force P–K4 with clear advantage in space, so such passive moves as 8 . . . R–K1 do not recommend themselves.

9 B × P N–Q4!

With the interpolation of the moves 8 . . . P–KR3 9 B–R4, White could now avoid exchanges and preserve some advantage with B–KN3. Now, however, he cannot prevent Black's plans.

10 B × B Q × B



Now Black's plan becomes apparent: he intends to free his game by advancing the KP. White can hardly prevent this, so his main hope of advantage lies in utilizing his active pieces and slight development lead to create attacking possibilities.

11 O–O

11 N–K4 (Alekhine) avoids further minor-piece exchanges and hopes for an end-game advantage after 11 . . . Q–N5 ch 12 Q–Q2. Black's most natural response is 11 . . . P–K4 12 O–O (12 P × P N(Q2) × P 13 B × N P × B 14 Q × P N × N ch 15 P × N B–K3 gives Black a strong initiative for the pawn) 12 . . . P × P 13 Q × P N(Q2)–N3 14 B–N3 B–N5 and White can hope for no more than a minimal advantage.

11 . . . N × N

12 R × N

12 P × N P–QB4 followed by . . . P–QN3 gives Black a comfortable position.

12 . . . P–K4

This completes the freeing manoeuvre, but whether Black has equalized is still open to doubt. White's most complicated continuation now is 13 P × P N × P 14 N × N Q × N 15 P–B4 hoping to use the pawns as a basis for an attack on Black's king. Black should restrain the pawns with 15 . . . Q–K5! 16 B–N3 B–B4! 17 Q–R5 (17 B–B2 Q–K3 gives White nothing) 17 . . . P–KN3 (necessary, since 17 . . . B–N3? 18 Q–R3 gives White a strong attack) 18 Q–R6 QR–Q1 19 B–B2 Q–Q4 20 P–K4! B × P 21 R–KR3 Q–B4 ch 22 R–B2 (22 K–R1? B × P ch!) 22 . . . KR–K1 and Black is no worse. After 23 Q × RP ch K–B1, White regains his pawn, but Black still has no problems.

Because analysis of this line led to nothing clear for White, slower methods have come to be preferred. The most attractive line seems to be 13 **Q–B2 P × P** (13 . . . P–K5 14 N–Q2 N–B3 15 B–N3 B–N5 16 R–B5 leaves the white pieces active, and Black's bishop ineffective) 14 **P × P** when White's attacking chances and possibilities of pressure along the K-file give him some initiative. There is a nice trap stemming from this position which is well worth knowing: 14 . . . N–B3 (14 . . . N–N3 is better) 15 R–K1 Q–Q3 16 N–N5 B–N5 17 R–KN3 B–R4 18 R–KR3 B–N3? (18 . . . Q–N5 is necessary) 19 Q × B! P × Q 20 B × P ch R × B 21 R–R8 ch K × R 22 N × R ch K–N1 23 N × Q and White emerges with an extra pawn.

Thus we see that the Orthodox Defence takes Black into the middle game with a sound but rather uninspiring position. While it succeeds in its prime objective of avoidance of weaknesses, Black's plan does not fully succeed in neutralizing White's opening initiative. Perhaps this is just a measure of the White advantage at the start of the game, and possibly Black should be content with a slight disadvantage. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Defence gradually became less popular and other lines for Black started to be explored more fully. We now

come to three of these alternative systems, in which Black tries to solve his problems by more energetic, but somewhat more risky, means.

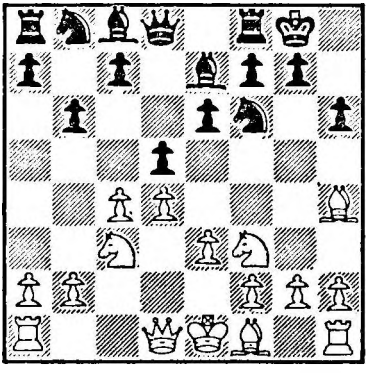
THE TARTAKOWER DEFENCE

After 1 **P–Q4 P–Q4** 2 **P–QB4 P–K3** 3 **N–QB3 N–KB3** 4 **B–N5 B–K2** 5 **P–K3 O–O** 6 **N–B3** Black plays to complete his development with a Q-side fianchetto, before committing the knight to Q2. First, however, a useful pawn move is played:

6 . . . P–KR3
7 B–R4

7 B × N B × B 8 Q–Q2 is an interesting alternative, giving White the option of long castling followed by P–KN4 and P–KR4. Black can play 8 . . . P–QN3 (also good is 8 . . . N–B3 intending to follow with . . . P × P and P–K4) 9 O–O–O N–B3 10 P–KR4 P–N3 11 P–KN4 B–N2 and Black is safe.

7 . . . P–QN3



This is the characteristic Tartakower position. Black intends to continue his development with B–N2, QN–Q2 and P–QB4. As we shall see, White's main hope of advantage lies in the

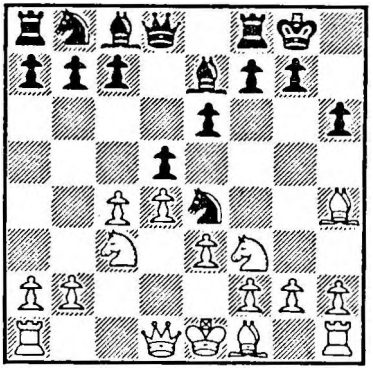
slight white-square weakness created by Black's last pawn move. Let us look at some typical continuations:
(a) 8 **R–B1** B–N2 9 B–Q3 P × P 10 B × P QN–Q2 11 O–O P–B4 gives Black free play for his pieces and easy equality.
(b) 8 **P × P N × P** 9 **B × B** (9 N × N is met by 9 . . . B × B) 9 . . . **Q × B** 10 **N × N** (or 10 R–B1 B–N2 11 B–Q3 R–B1! 12 O–O P–QB4 with equality) 10 . . . **P × N** 11 **R–B1 B–K3!** (with the long diagonal now blocked, the bishop is best placed here rather than on N2). Black's plan now is to continue with P–QB4 and an advance of his Q-side pawns. White must restrain the pawns and hope for pressure against them. A normal continuation is 12 Q–R4 P–QB4 13 Q–R3 R–B1 (13 . . . N–Q2 is strongly met by 14 B–R6) 14 B–K2 K–B1 with equal chances. Fischer scored a famous victory against Spassky in 1972 with 14 B–N5 instead of B–K2, gaining the advantage after 14 . . . P–R3 15 P × P P × P 16 O–O R–R2 17 B–K2 N–Q2 18 N–Q4! Q–B1 19 N × B P × N 20 P–K4! Subsequent analysis uncovered the right way to meet 14 B–N5: 14 . . . Q–N2! 15 P × P P × P 16 R × P R × R 17 Q × R N–R3! 18 B × N (or 18 Q–B6 Q × Q 19 B × Q R–N1) 18 . . . Q × B 19 Q–R3 Q–B5 and Black's initiative is worth the pawn. Black must play vigorously in this line, but experience shows that his position is sufficient for an active game.
(c) 8 **R–B1 B–N2** 9 **B × N B × B** 10 **P × P P × P** (10 . . . QB × P 11 B–Q3 leaves Black in a tangle) looks a little strange in so far as White loses a move to exchange his bishop. This, however, has ensured that the black bishop is now committed to the unfortunate N2 square, blocked by its own pawn. After 11 P–QN4 P–B3 (preventing White obtaining a bind with P–N5) 12 B–K2 Q–Q3 13 Q–N3 (13 P–N5 P–B4 gives Black no trouble) 13 . . . QN–Q2 Black must play with care to ensure that White does not force P–N5 under favourable circumstances, but he ought to be able to maintain the balance.

As we see in many of these lines, the move 7 . . . P–QN3 serves the double purpose of supporting the advance P–QB4 and giving the bishop the chance to develop on QN2. Black

must always remember that, after certain continuations, the bishop can still be better placed after all on the QB1–KR6 diagonal.

LASKER'S DEFENCE:

1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 4 B–N5 B–K2 5 P–K3 O–O 6 N–B3 P–KR3 7 B–R4 N–K5



This is a radical attempt to free Black's game by means of exchanges. It can also be played without the preliminary P–KR3. The difference in that case is not great; we shall see later where the effects lie.

8 B × B Q × B
9 P × P

White plays for a majority of pawns in the centre. Instead, 9 Q–B2 N × N 10 Q × N P–QB3 or 9 R–B1 P–QB3 10 B–Q3 N × N 11 R × N P × P 12 R × P N–Q2 leaves Black with a solid, albeit somewhat passive position. Note that the latter line is less attractive for Black if the move P–KR3 has been omitted, since the white queen and bishop will be able to gain a tempo by attacking the pawn on KR2.

9 . . . N × N
10 P × N P × P
11 Q–N3

This is the normal position of Lasker's Defence. White will continue with P–QB4 after which his central pawns give him some advantage. Black, however, stays actively placed and is not without counterplay. For example, 11 . . . Q–Q3 (or 11 . . . R–Q1 12 P–B4 P × P 13 B × P N–B3 14 B–K2 R–Q3, though this is perhaps more appropriate if the black KRP is left unmoved, when the rook still has the possibility to play to KR3) 12 P–B4 P × P 13 B × P N–B3 14 B–K2 P–QN3. In almost all these lines Black does not quite equalize, since the white pawn structure remains preferable, but White's advantage is not enough to condemn the whole variation, and Lasker's Defence is still occasionally played even by the strongest grandmasters.

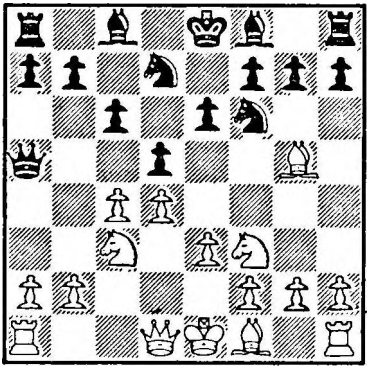
THE CAMBRIDGE SPRINGS DEFENCE

After **1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 4 B–N5 QN–Q2** Black introduces a new theme into the defence. The idea is to play P–QB3 and Q–R4, trying to take advantage of the absence of the white QB from its home square. The development of Black's KB is delayed, since it may be effectively placed on N5 rather than K2.

5 P–K3

This shuts the bishop out on KN5, thus making the K1–QR5 diagonal more vulnerable, but it is a move White can hardly avoid. For example, 5 N–B3 P–B3 6 Q–B2 (6 P–K4 P × KP 7 N × P P–KR3 8 N × N ch N × N 9 B–Q2 P–B4 gives Black no difficulties) 6 . . . P–KR3! and White must exchange with 7 B × N since 7 B–R4 P–KN4 8 B–N3 P × P leaves him unable to regain the pawn.

5 . . . P–B3
6 N–B3 Q–R4



This is the characteristic position of the Cambridge Springs Defence (so called after the American town where the line became popular in an international tournament in 1904). Black already threatens 7 . . . N–K5 and White must take appropriate action.

7 P × P

7 B–Q3 N–K5! is fine for Black, who threatens both 7 . . . N × N and 7 . . . N × B 8 N × N P × P winning a piece. The main alternatives to the text are 7 B × N N × B 8 B–Q3 B–N5 or 7 N–Q2 P × P 8 B × N N × B 9 N × P Q–B2. In both cases White retains a development lead, but the black bishop pair can become effective later in the game.

7 . . . N × P
8 Q–Q2 N(Q2)–N3

8 . . . B–N5 9 R–B1 and the black attack comes no further. The text move prepares to bring the other knight to Q4 after exchanging its colleague. The immediate threat is 9 . . . N × N 10 P × N N–Q4 11 R–B1 N × BP! and there is little White can do to stop it. After 9 R–B1 N × N 10 P × N N–Q4 11 B–Q3 (or 11 B–QB4 N × BP 12 O–O P–N4! with great complications) 11 . . . N × BP 12 O–O B–N5 13 P–QR3

Q × P 14 R–R1 Q–N6 White appears to have a great deal for his sacrificed pawns, but no clear way to take advantage of the tangled black pieces. After 15 KR–B1 (or 15 N–K5 O–O 16 B–QB4 N–K5 17 Q–K2 Q–B6 18 QR–B1 Q–Q7) 15 . . . N–R7 16 Q × N Q × B 17 P–Q5! O–O! the position remains unclear.

All these variations suggest that the Cambridge Springs is a fully playable defence to the Queen's Gambit. Perhaps its main defect is that the Black order of moves encourages White to meet 5 . . . P–B3 with 6 P × P KP × P 7 Q–B2 leading to the Exchange Variation, which is the line we discuss next.

THE EXCHANGE VARIATION

As soon as the moves 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 are played, the possibility arises in the position for White to exchange pawns. This exchange will cause immediate imbalance in the pawn formation, thereby setting the strategic theme for the subsequent play. White opens the diagonal for the black QB, but also gives himself the options of pawn advances on the Q-side with P–QN4 and P–N5 (the 'minority attack') or in the centre with P–KB3 and P–K4. White may play BP × QP at various moments in the opening. Often, particularly against the Cambridge Springs Variation, it is delayed until move 5 or 6. Here we shall consider an earlier exchange of pawns, but the positions reached usually come to the same.

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 N–KB3
4 P × P

After 4 B–N5 B–K2 it is already too late for White to exchange, since Black meets 5 P × P with 5 . . . N × P! leading to freeing exchanges. Sometimes Black plays 3 . . . B–K2 instead of N–KB3, to reach main-line positions after 4 N–B3 N–KB3

5 B–N5 (5 P × P P × P 6 B–N5 P–B3 7 Q–B2 P–KN3! enables Black to develop his problem bishop). If White wants an exchange formation here, he must take immediately: 4 P × P P × P 5 B–B4.

4 . . . P × P

4 . . . N × P 5 P–K4 favours White.

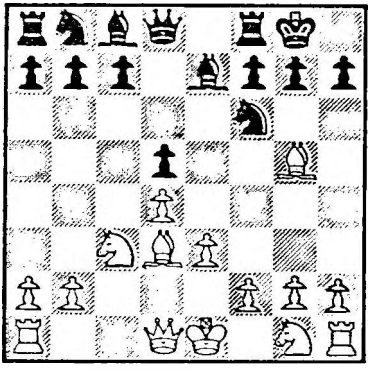
5 B–N5 B–K2

5 . . . P–B3 6 P–K3 B–B4 would be careless, owing to the reply 7 Q–B3! and Black cannot avoid the doubling of his KB-pawns.

6 P–K3 O–O

6 . . . B–B4 still does not work: 7 B × N B × N 8 Q–N3 attacking two pawns, but 6 . . . P–B3 is a good alternative. After 7 Q–B2 (7 B–Q3 N–K5! is good) 7 . . . B–KN5!? Black can bring the bishop via KR4 to KN3 to force its exchange. This type of possibility is why some white players only adopt the Exchange Variation after an early . . . QN–Q2 by Black.

7 B–Q3



This is a characteristic Exchange Variation position. Let us look at some typical continuations:

(a) 7 . . . P–B3 8 Q–B2 QN–Q2 9 KN–K2 R–K1 10 O–O–O N–B1 11 P–KR3 followed by P–KN4 with attacking chances.

(b) 7 . . . QN–Q2 is more flexible, retaining the option of . . . P–QB4 if White castles long. For this reason, after 8 Q–B2 R–K1 9 KN–K2 N–B1 White usually prefers 10 O–O P–B3 11 P–B3 trying to advance in the centre. Black should react promptly with 11 . . . P–KR3 12 B–R4 P–B4! with active play.

(c) 7 . . . QN–Q2 8 N–B3 is a more common plan, intending Q-side action, rather than a central push. After 8 . . . R–K1 9 Q–B2 P–B3 10 O–O N–B1, White's most effective plan is 11 B × N! B × B 12 P–QN4 B–N5 13 N–Q2. White's plan is to weaken the Black Q-side pawns by playing P–QN5, which can also create a useful outpost for the knight on QB5. Black should always be prepared to meet P–N5 with . . . P–QB4, opening the position for his bishops. His chances are not worse, but Black must avoid being driven into passivity. The 'minority attack' of two white Q-side pawns against three black is one of White's most feared weapons in the Queen's Gambit.

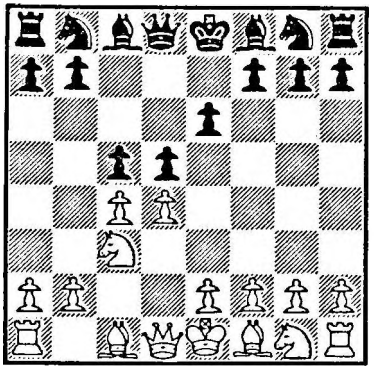
THE TARRASCH VARIATION: 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 P–QB4

As we have seen, most lines in which Black declines the Queen's Gambit tend to maintain soundness of position rather than striving for vigorous counterplay. The Tarrasch is an exception. By playing 3 . . . P–QB4 Black strikes immediately in the centre and willingly accepts a permanent weakness in the shape of an isolated QP, in exchange for piece activity. (See diagram opposite.)

4 BP × P KP × P

4 . . . BP × P!? is the lively but dubious von Hennig-Schara gambit. After 5 Q–R4 ch B–Q2 6 Q × QP P × P 7 Q × QP N–QB3 8 N–B3 N–B3 9 Q–Q1 B–QB4 10 P–K3 Q–K2 11 B–K2 O–O–O 12 O–O P–KN4 13 N–Q4 Black's attack does not convince.

5 N–B3



5 P × P is most simply met by 5 . . . N–KB3 6 B–N5 B × P though Tarrasch's original idea of 5 . . . P–Q5!? 6 N–R4 P–QN4!? is also possible.

5 . . . N–QB3

6 P–KN3

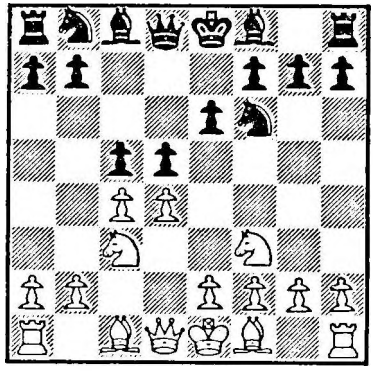
The bishop is most effectively developed on KN2, bearing down on the QP. White's plan now is to complete his development, waiting for a suitable moment to force the isolation of the black QP. Objectively his superior pawn structure gives White the advantage, but the black pieces are all active and this variation can be very dangerous in the hands of an attacking player. Some examples:

(a) 6 . . . P–B5 prevents the isolation of his QP, but leaves Black susceptible to a later central break. After 7 B–N2 B–QN5 8 O–O KN–K2 9 P–K4! White has the advantage.

(b) 6 . . . N–B3 7 B–N2 B–K2 8 O–O O–O is the normal development plan. Now 9 P × P P–Q5 10 N–QR4 B–B4 is an attractive pawn sacrifice for Black, so White usually prefers more positional methods. After 9 B–N5!? P × P 10 KN × P P–KR3 11 B–K3 R–K1 12 Q–R4 B–Q2 13 QR–Q1 White is well placed to begin operations against the isolated pawn.

THE SEMI-TARRASCH: 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 4 N–B3 P–B4

Often the Queen's Gambit is reached by a move order in which the white knight finds itself developed to KB3 earlier than usual. For example, 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–KB3 (expecting a Queen's Indian Defence with 3 . . . P–QN3) 3 . . . P–Q4 4 N–B3; or 1 N–KB3 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 P–Q4 etc. In such cases, as when White plays 4 N–KB3 instead of the customary 4 B–N5 in the normal Queen's Gambit, Black may strive for immediate freedom with 4 . . . P–B4. Note, incidentally, that after 4 B–N5 the freeing 4 . . . P–B4 is hardly playable since 5 BP × P KP × P 6 B × N is simply bad for Black, while 5 . . . Q–N3?! 6 B × N! Q × P 7 R–B1 P × B 8 P–K3 and 5 . . . BP × P 6 Q × P B–K2 7 P–K4 N–B3 8 Q–Q2 are both highly dubious gambits.



5 BP × P N × P

5 . . . KP × P takes us back to the Tarrasch proper after 6 P–KN3. Recapturing with the knight avoids the isolated pawn which characterizes that line.

6 P–K4

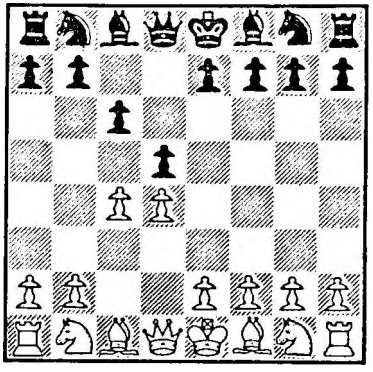
6 P–K3 N–QB3 7 B–Q3 B–K2 is another way to play, but the text is more energetic.

6 . . . N × N
7 P × N P × P
8 P × P

White's mobile central pawns have dangerous attacking potential, but if Black can keep them under restraint then his own Q-side pawns may be valuable. White's attacking possibilities were well illustrated in the game Polugayevsky–Tal, USSR Championship, 1969: 8 . . . B–N5 ch 9 B–Q2 B × B ch (9 . . . Q–R4 10 R–QN1! B × B ch 11 Q × B Q × Q ch 12 K × Q O–O 13 B–N5 gives Black a very difficult end-game to defend) 10 Q × B O–O 11 B–QB4 N–B3 12 O–O P–QN3 13 QR–Q1 B–N2 14 KR–K1 R–B1 (14 . . . N–K2! gives a more solid defence) 15 P–Q5! N–R4 16 B–Q3 P × P 17 P–K5 N–B5 18 Q–B4 N–N7 19 B × P ch! K × B 20 N–N5 ch K–N3 21 P–KR4! R–B5 22 P–R5 ch! K–R3 (22 . . . K × P 23 P–N4 ch K–N3 24 Q–B5 ch K–R3 25 Q–R7 ch K × N 26 Q–R5 ch K–B5 27 Q–B5 is mate) 23 N × P ch K–R2 24 Q–B5 ch K–N1 25 P–K6! Q–B3 (25 . . . Q–K2 26 P–R6! would win for White) 26 Q × Q P × Q 27 R–Q2 (27 N–Q6! is also very strong) 27 . . . R–B3 28 R × N R–K1 29 N–R6 ch K–R2 30 N–B5 R(1) × P 31 R × R R × R 32 R–B2 R–B3 33 R–K2 B–B1 4 R–K7 ch K–R1 35 N–R4 P–B4 36 N–N6 ch K–N1 37 R × P and Black resigned.

Such games as this suggested that Black ought to seek immediate activity against the centre. One idea is 8 . . . N–B3 9 B–QB4 P–QN4!? though White can still keep a slight initiative with 10 B–K2 B–N5 ch 11 B–Q2 Q–R4 12 P–Q5. Perhaps the Semi-Tarrasch practitioner simply has to be willing to face the attack, but prepared to defend it better than in the game above.

THE SLAV DEFENCE:
1 P–Q4 PQ4 2 P–QB4 P–QB3



By defending his QP in this manner, Black keeps open the line of his QB. Attractive as this may seem, it does not solve Black's development problems completely since, as we shall see, the bishop can only be brought out safely if Black first concedes central ground by playing . . . QP × P. There are, however, other points in favour of the move . . . P–QB3, mainly connected with the possibility of . . . P–QN4. In many lines Black threatens delayed acceptance of the Queen's Gambit pawn, when he will be well placed to maintain the extra material or initiate counterplay with . . . P–QN4.

3 N–KB3

White most commonly delays development of his Q-knight, though 3 N–QB3 is also fully playable. After 3 . . . P × P 4 P–K4 P–QN4 (or 4 . . . P–K4 5 N–B3! P × P 6 Q × P Q × Q 7 N × Q with advantage to White) 5 P–QR4 Q–R4 6 B–Q2 P–N5 7 N–R2 White regains his pawn with the better game. Black therefore usually plays 3 . . . N–B3 leading back to the main line after 4 N–B3.

3 . . . N–B3

4 N–B3

4 P × P P × P is the Exchange Variation; its symmetry gives

White little chance of advantage. After 5 N–B3 N–B3 6 B–B4 Black has the choice between the very solid 6 . . . P–K3 7 P–K3 B–Q3 and 6 . . . B–B4 7 P–K3 P–K3 8 B–QN5, when he must break the symmetry with 8 . . . N–Q2! to avoid trouble on the diagonal.

4 . . . P × P

After 4 . . . B–B4?! White secures an immediate advantage with 5 P × P P × P 6 Q–N3. Black therefore has to surrender the centre in order to develop his bishop. The move, 4 . . . P × P, does, however, have positive merit in that White must now go to somewhat extravagant lengths to regain his pawn. The main alternative to 4 . . . P × P is to add to the central support with 4 . . . P–K3, leading to a hybrid Queen's Gambit defence known as the Semi-Slav. We shall discuss this later.

5 P–QR4!

The only good way to ensure that White regains the pawn. 5 P–K4 P–QN4 6 P–K5 N–Q4 7 P–QR4 P–K3 8 P × P N × N 9 P × N P × P 10 N–N5 B–N2 is a gambit possibility where White's attack, though certainly dangerous, does not seem to give full value for the pawn. Instead, 5 P–K3 P–QN4 6 P–QR4 does win back the pawn, but after 6 . . . P–N5 7 N–N1 (or 7 N–R2 P–K3 8 B × P B–N2) 7 . . . B–R3 8 Q–B2 P–K3 9 B × P B × B 10 Q × B Q–Q4 Black has easy equality.

5 . . . B–B4

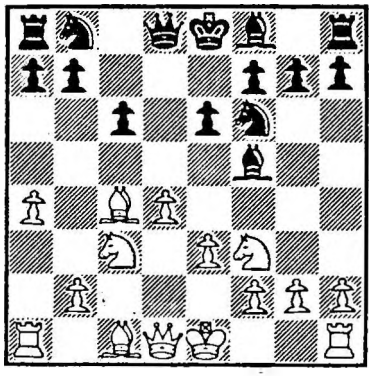
6 P–K3

6 N–K5 is another good way to regain the pawn; White can then prepare to establish a big centre with P–KB3 and P–K4.

6 . . . P–K3

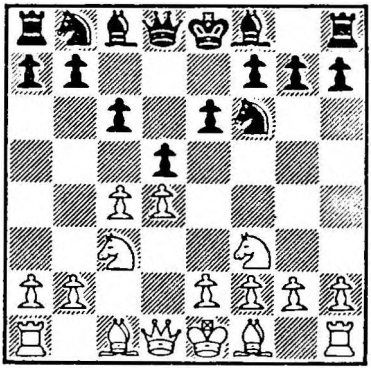
7 B × P (see upper diagram overleaf)

This is the normal position in the Slav Defence. White has accepted certain weaknesses on the Q-side, but his mobile centre pawns still give him the preferable position. Black, however, has no clear weakness and a sound, albeit essentially



defensive, game. A typical continuation is 7 . . . B–QN5 8 O–O O–O 9 Q–K2 QN–Q2 (9 . . . N–K5 is well met by 10 N–R2! B–K2 11 B–Q3 N–Q2 12 Q–B2 N–Q3 13 P–K4 and Black is driven back) 10 P–K4 B–N3 11 B–Q3 and White controls more space. Black's position is still, however, tough to crack.

THE SEMI-SLAV:
1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–QB3 3 N–KB3 N–B3 4 N–B3 P–K3



5 P–K3

White protects his QBP. The main alternative (apart from 5 P × P leading to Queen's Gambit or Slav Exchange Variations after 5 . . . KP × P or 5 . . . BP × P respectively) is 5 B–N5 giving Black three choices:

(a) 5 . . . QN–Q2 is the Cambridge Springs Defence again.

(b) 5 . . . P–KR3 6 B × N Q × B leaves the black queen poorly developed; after 7 Q–N3! (7 P–K4 P × KP 8 N × P B–N5 ch gives Black more freedom) 7 . . . N–Q2 8 P–K4 White obtains some advantage in space and development.

(c) 5 . . . P × P! 6 P–K4 P–N4 is Botvinnik's complicated 'Anti-Meran Gambit'. There can follow 7 P–K5 (7 P–QR4 is no longer effective because Black has the reply 7 . . . B–N5) 7 . . . P–KR3 8 B–R4 P–N4 9 KN × P (9 P × N P × B 10 N–K5 Q × BP seems less effective) 9 . . . P × N 10 B × NP QN–Q2 11 P–N3! (12 P × N B–N2 makes it hard for White to develop his KB satisfactorily) 11 . . . B–N2 12 B–N2 with a position of intense complexity. Black generally castles long and relies on his Q-side pawn mass, while White puts his faith in his dominance on the other wing. Not a variation for the faint-hearted!

5 . . . QN–Q2

6 B–Q3 P × P

Black's best chance of active play. Against slow development White breaks through with P–K4; for example 6 . . . B–Q3 7 P–K4 P × KP 8 N × P N × N 9 B × N P–K4 10 O–O P × P (10 . . . O–O allows 11 P × P N × P 12 N × N B × N 13 B × P ch! K × B 14 Q–R5 ch winning a pawn) 11 Q × P Q–B3 12 Q–Q1 and Black is in difficulties.

7 B × BP P–QN4

This is known as the Meran Variation; Black expands on the Q-side, intending to regain central ground with . . . P–QB4 later. Experience has shown, however, that by immediate play in the centre White has every hope of advantage. After 8 B–Q3 there can follow:

(a) 8 . . . P–QR3 9 P–K4 P–B4 used to be the main line, leading to unresolved complications after 10 P–K5 P × P 11 N × NP! P × N 12 P × N Q–N3! 13 P × P B × P. Later it was discovered that White can gain advantage by pushing the other centre pawn: 10 P–Q5 P–B5 (10 . . . P × P 11 P–K5! is strong for White, but 10 . . . P–K4 may be safer than the text) 11 P × P P × B 12 P × N ch Q × P 13 N–K5 and White gains the advantage.
(b) 8 . . . P–N5 9 N–K4! N × N 10 B × N B–N2 11 Q–R4 Q–N3 12 N–Q2! also favours White; he has excellent squares for his minor pieces, and Black finds it hard to free his game.
(c) 8 . . . B–N2 is an interesting waiting move, but again not quite good enough for equality: 9 P–K4 P–N5 10 N–R4 P–B4 11 P–K5! N–Q4 12 O–O (after 12 N × P B × N 13 P × B N × BP 14 B–N5 ch K–B1 Black's position is quite playable; his good knights make it difficult for White to attack successfully) 12 . . . P × P 13 R–K1 B–K2 14 N × P and White has good prospects of a strong attack on the K-side.

These lines show how important it is for White to play energetically when Black adopts such an ambitious strategy. After Black has temporarily given ground in the centre, White's duty is to take full and immediate advantage of his control of space; any Q-side defensive measures will only give Black time to equalize in the centre with . . . P–QB4.

OTHER DEFENCES TO THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT

After 1 P–Q4 2 P–Q4 P–QB4, the moves 2 . . . P × P, 2 . . . P–K3 and 2 . . . P–QB3 are undeniably the most logical. There are, however, some other possibilities which deserve a brief mention:

A: The Albin Counter-gambit: 2 . . . P–K4

Black offers a pawn in the interests of quick development. Such a sacrifice cannot really be correct, but White must tread warily. After 3 P × KP P–Q5 a well-known trap is 4 P–K3? B–N5 ch 5 B–Q2 P × P! 6 B × B? P × P ch 7 K–K2 P × N = N ch! 8 K–K1 Q–R5 ch and Black is winning. Instead, White should cut out any nonsense with 4 N–KB3 N–QB3 5 P–KN3 (5 P–QR3 is also good) 5 . . . B–N5 6 B–N2 Q–Q2 7 O–O O–O–O 8 Q–N3 with clear advantage; 8 . . . B–KR6 is met by 9 P–K6! B × P 10 N–K5.

B: Chigorin's Defence: 2 . . . N–QB3

This is another mildly eccentric response. The main ideas are seen in the variation 3 N–KB3 B–N5 4 P × P B × N 5 NP × B (or 5 P × N B × BP 6 N–B3 P–K3 7 P–K4 B–N5 8 P–B3 P–B4 9 B–QB4 when White seems better in a wild position) 5 . . . Q × P 6 P–K3 P–K4 7 N–B3 B–N5 8 B–Q2 B × N 9 P × B Q–Q3 and it is not easy for White to make his bishop pair felt. A more simple procedure for White is 3 N–QB3 P × P (neither 3 . . . P–K4 4 P × QP N × P 5 P–K3 N–B4 6 P–K4 nor 3 . . . N–B3 4 N–B3 B–N5 5 P × P KN × P 6 P–K4 B × N 7 NP × B N–N3 8 P–Q5 is any improvement for Black) 4 N–B3! N–B3 (4 . . . B–N5 is very strongly met by 5 P–Q5! B × N 6 KP × B N–K4 7 B–B4 N–N3 8 KB × P! with a huge initiative for White) 5 P–K4 B–N5 6 B–K3 B × N 7 P × B P–K4 8 P–Q5 N–K2 9 B × BP N–N3 10 Q–N3 and White has a clear advantage. His lead in development enables him to exploit the absence of Black's light-squared bishop.

C: The Symmetrical Defence: 2 . . . P–QB4

Black must be a little optimistic to hope to get away with such violent response, but White needs to play vigorously to gain

advantage: 3 P × QP N–KB3 (3 . . . Q × P 4 N–KB3 P × P leaves Black in difficulties after 5 N–B3 Q–Q1 6 Q × P! White's development lead is surprisingly effective after exchange of queens) 4 P–K4! (4 P × P Q × P 5 B–Q2 also keeps the advantage, but the text is more incisive) 4 . . . N × KP 5 P × P N × QBP (5 . . . Q–R4 ch 6 B–Q2 Q × BP? loses a piece to 7 Q–R4 ch) 6 N–QB3 and Black finds it hard to complete his development; 6 . . . P–K3 is met by 7 P–QN4! Q–B3 8 Q–B2 N(4)–R3 9 P–QR3 and White maintains considerable pressure.

D: 2 . . . B–B4

This provocative move invites complications after 3 Q–N3 P–K4! 4 Q × P N–Q2 with a dangerous development lead for Black. The simplest way for White to gain advantage is 3 N–KB3 P–K3 4 Q–N3 N–QB3 5 P–B5 (but not 5 Q × P N–N5!) 5 . . . R–N1 6 N–B3 when the black Q-side pieces are all on inappropriate squares.

E: 2 . . . N–KB3

Black invites transposition to normal lines after 3 N–QB3 P–K3 (or 3 . . . P–B3) but White has better: 3 P × P! N × P 4 N–KB3! (4 P–K4 N–KB3 is less effective since 5 N–QB3 can be met by 5 . . . P–K4!) 4 . . . B–B4 (otherwise 5 P–K4 will be strong for White) 5 Q–N3 P–K3 6 N–B3 (6 Q × P N–Q2 takes unnecessary chances for White) and Black is already getting into difficulties; 6 . . . N–QB3 is met by 7 P–K4 N × N 8 P × B with clear advantage to White.

Finally a characteristic Queen's Gambit win by Karpov, on his way to winning the World Championship.

WHITE: KARPOV BLACK: SPASSKY
(Eleventh Game, Candidates' Match, 1974)

1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–KB3 P–Q4 4 N–B3 B–K2 5 B–N5 P–KR3 6 B–R4 O–O 7 P–K3 P–QN3 8 B–K2 B–N2 9 B × N B × B 10 P × P P × P 11 O–O Q–Q3 12 R–B1 P–R3

12 . . . P–B3 is a more natural way to prevent 13 N–QN5, but Black has an ambitious idea in mind.

13 P–QR3 N–Q2 14 P–QN4 P–QN4

This is the point. Black plans to take the sting out of White's Q-side pawn advance by playing his knight to N3 and B5, shielding the backward pawn on QB3.

15 N–K1 P–B3 16 N–Q3 N–N3?

But this is too direct; 16 . . . P–QR4 was a better way to handle the Q-side. Now White gains an advantage on that wing.

17 P–QR4! B–Q1 18 N–B5 B–B1 19 P–R5 B–B2 20 P–N3 N–B5 21 P–K4! B–R6 22 R–K1

White's central break exposes the weaknesses in the black position. Now the QBP becomes vulnerable from another direction.

22 . . . P × P 23 N(3) × KP Q–N3 24 B–R5! Q–R2 25 Q–B3

The white pieces cooperate beautifully while Black's are totally uncoordinated. The immediate threat is P–KN4 trapping the bishop.

25 . . . P–B4 26 N–B3 P–N3

Black wins a piece, but the damage to his position is already too great. The resulting White attack is slaughter.

27 Q × QBP P × N 28 N–Q5 P–B5 29 R–K7 Q–B4 30 R × B QR–K1 31 Q × KRP R–B2 32 R × R K × R 33 Q × BP R–K7 34 Q–B7 ch K–B1 35 N–B4 Resigns.

CHAPTER 8

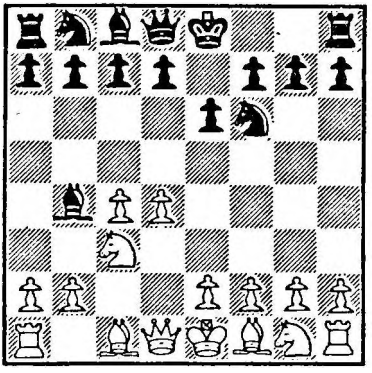
The Indian Defences

As theory on the Queen's Gambit grew, more players gradually became disinclined to defend it with the black pieces. Although a clear White advantage could never be demonstrated, Black always seemed to be fighting for equality and no more. Ambitious temperaments wanted something more aggressive, so from the 1930s onwards much effort was given to analysing other responses to 1 P–Q4. The openings which emerged, King's Indian, Nimzo-Indian, Queen's Indian and Grünfeld Defence, all see Black striving for immediate activity. The increased ambitions of these defences naturally carry with them greater risk, but all are now established as reputable openings. As a warning, however, one should always remember that the bad positions one can achieve from risky openings tend to be considerably worse than the bad positions brought about by slightly inferior play in, for example, the Queen's Gambit Declined!

THE NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENCE: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 B–N5

(see diagram opposite)

Apart from the sin of cutting Nimzowitsch's name in half, this ought not strictly to be called an Indian defence at all. The term 'Indian' originally referred only to lines involving fianchetto development of a bishop, such as was common in the old Indian form of the game. But the misnomer has stuck, and the Nimzo-Indian remains one of the most reliable defences to 1 P–Q4.



By pinning the knight, Black prevents P–K4 and introduces the threat of doubling White's pawns by playing B × N. On the other hand, this exchange, to which Black is virtually committed in many lines, does give White the bishop pair. Many variations revolve around the fight between the white bishops and the black knights, and this is what gives the Nimzo-Indian its dynamic potential. Let us see how the ideas work in practice:

A: The Sämisch Variation: 4 P–QR3 B × N ch 5 P × B

This is White's most radical challenge to Black's strategy. By forcing the immediate exchange of the bishop, he accepts the pawn weakness in the belief that the attacking chances given by White's centre pawns and bishop pair will prove more potent.

5 . . . P–B4

Black fixes the pawns and prepares his attack on the white centre.

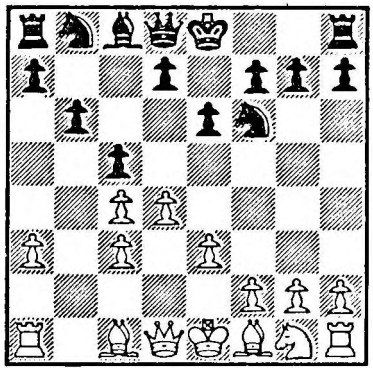
6 P–K3

Another line is 6 P–B3, intending to form a big centre with 7 P–K4. Black responds with 6 . . . P–Q4! 7 BP × P N × P 8 P × P Q–R4 when White's lag in development and permanent

pawn weaknesses give Black good prospects of counterplay against the two bishops.

6 . . . P–QN3

After 6 . . . O–O 7 B–Q3 P–QN3 8 P–K4 White would have the promising attacking position he desires. Black must therefore play with more subtlety.



In this position, Black is already thinking about his attack on the front QBP with B–R3, N–QB3 and N–QR4; White must seize the initiative before he is forced on to the defensive. He has two possibilities of attack:

(a) 7 **B–Q3** B–N2! 8 P–B3 N–B3 9 N–K2 O–O 10 P–K4 N–K1! By forcing White to play P–KB3, Black has made it more difficult for the white queen to join an attack. He is also now ready to besiege the weak pawn with . . . R–QB1 and N–QR4, while the retreat of the other knight enables P–K5 to be met by . . . P–B4, keeping the attackers at bay. After 11 O–O N–R4 12 N–N3 B–R3 13 Q–K2 P × P 14 P × P R–B1 15 P–B4!? N × P 16 P–B5 P–B3 Black has won his pawn, but White maintains some initiative.

(b) 7 **N–K2** has the intention of meeting 7 . . . B–N2 with 8 N–N3 O–O 9 B–Q3 since 9 . . . B × P 10 R–KN1 would be very dangerous for Black. Better therefore is to play for immediate attack on the pawn with 7 . . . B–R3 8 N–N3 Q–B2

when White's most aggressive continuation is 9 P–K4 P × P 10 P × P B × P 11 Q–B2 P–Q4 12 B–Q3 with attacking chances for the pawn. As we see, White has always to be prepared to sacrifice a pawn in this line or his strategy makes no sense. Nevertheless, such offers are not convincing, so the Sämisch Variation has never attained really great popularity.

B: The Leningrad Variation: 4 B–N5

Another sharp line, answering Black's pin with the same medicine. The disadvantage is that White's bishop may be missed away from the Q-side. After 4 . . . P–B4 5 P–Q5 (5 P–K3?? Q–R4 is already winning for Black) 5 . . . P–Q3 6 P–K3 B × N ch 7 P × B P–K4 Black achieves his central blockade which makes it difficult for White to utilize his two bishops effectively. After 8 B–Q3 P–KR3 9 B–R4 P–K5! 10 B–B2 (not 10 B × P? P–KN4) QN–Q2 11 N–K2 Q–K2 Black has a comfortable game. Besides this blockading possibility, Black has a vigorous reply in 4 . . . P–B4 5 P–Q5 P–KR3 6 B–R4 P–QN4!? when 7 P × KP BP × P 8 P × P P–Q4 gives Black undeniable activity for the pawn.

While both still perfectly playable, the Sämisch and Leningrad variations somewhat rebound on their aggressive intentions. In both cases Black secures immediate counterplay by natural means. Generally, therefore, White players prefer to meet the Nimzo-Indian more quietly, as we shall see in the variations which follow.

C: 4 Q–B2

is the most natural way to avoid the doubling of White's pawns, but seems rather too quiet to hope for advantage.

4 . . . P–B4

A natural reaction, hitting at White's undefended QP. Also playable are 4 . . . P–Q4 and 4 . . . N–QB3.

5 P × P O–O

Now Black's idea is clear: P–QR3 will be met by . . . B × BP, refusing to let White carry out his plan of gaining the bishop pair with no damage to his pawns.

6 N–B3

6 B–B4 or 6 B–N5 can also be met by 6 . . . N–R3. In either case after 7 P–QR3 B × N ch 8 Q × B N × P Black has a comfortable position with actively placed knights.

6 . . . N–R3

Chances are equal. After 7 P–K3 N × P 8 B–Q2 P–QN3 9 B–K2 B–N2 10 O–O QN–K5 11 N × N B × N the exchanges lead to equality.

Note that against 4 Q–N3 instead of 4 Q–B2, an even simpler version of the same idea gives Black easy equality: 4 . . . P–B4 5 P × P N–B3 6 N–B3 N–K5 7 B–Q2 N × B 8 N × N B × P 9 P–K3 (9 N(2)–K4 P–Q3! is fine for Black) 9 . . . O–O 10 B–K2 P–QN3 with an easy development and no problems.

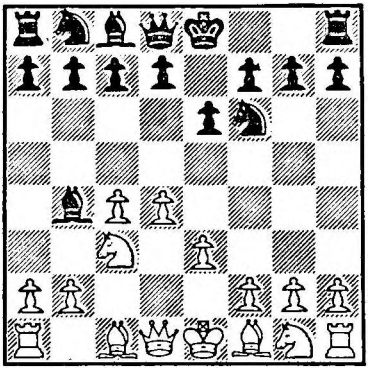
D: The Rubinstein Variation: 4 P–K3

(see diagram opposite)

This unpretentious move has become the most popular against the Nimzo-Indian. White simply develops quietly, leaving P–QR3 until White's resulting bishop pair can claim a real advantage. By renouncing the violence of 4 P–QR3 and 4 B–N5, and also ignoring the pin on the knight, White announces that he does not consider it necessary to support that piece with Q–B2, believing that the bishop on N5 is misplaced and will lead to trouble for Black if ignored.

4 . . . O–O

The most flexible response; Black must prepare central pawn action, but does best to postpone decisions until White is more committed. The alternatives all give White more scope:



a) 4 . . . P–Q4 gives White the chance of 5 P–QR3 B × N ch 6 P × B when Black's central pawn move ensures that the doubled pawns can be liquidated. Of course the resulting position is playable for Black, but White would have succeeded in securing an improved Sämisch Variation.
(b) 4 . . . P–B4 cuts off the retreat of the bishop and can be met by 5 N–K2 when 5 . . . P–Q4 6 P–QR3 B × N ch 7 N × B P × QP 8 KP × P P × P 9 B × P gives the white bishops good attacking possibilities in the middle game.
(c) 4 . . . P–QN3 is an interesting possibility, meeting 5 N–K2 with 5 . . . B–R3. White has the choice between 6 P–QR3 B × N ch 7 N × B P–Q4 8 P–QN3 O–O 9 B–K2, and 6 N–N3 B × N ch 7 P × B P–Q4 8 B–R3 (or 8 Q–B3!?). The white bishops look as though they ought to be superior to the black knights in all these lines, but in practice it is hard to make them count.

5 B–Q3

5 N–K2 is no longer particularly effective; after 5 . . . P–Q4 6 P–QR3 B–K2! the white pieces, developed mainly to meet . . . B × N ch, are awkwardly placed.

5 . . . P–B4

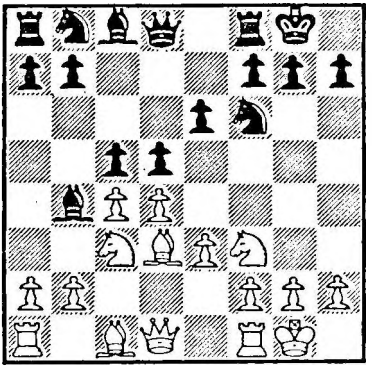
5 . . . P–Q4 6 N–B3 P–B4 transposes to the main line, but again gives White the option of playing 6 P–QR3, whereupon:

(a) 6 . . . P × P 7 B × P ch!? (or 7 B × P B–Q3 8 N–B3 with a quieter game and still prospects of a small advantage) 7 . . . N × B 8 P × B QN–B3 9 P–N5 N–N5 10 N–B3 N–Q6 ch 11 K–B1 with complications.
(b) 6 . . . B × N ch 7 P × B P–B4 8 P × QP KP × P and White has liquidated his doubled pawn, leaving good prospects of advantage with the bishop pair. After 9 N–K2 (leaving open the possibility of P–KB3 and P–K4 later) 9 . . . P–QN3 10 O–O B–R3 11 B–B2 N–B3 12 P–B3 R–K1 13 R–B2 Q–B2 14 P–N4! White has good chances to develop a K-side initiative.

6 N–B3

6 N–K2 P–Q4 7 P–QR3 B × N ch is no longer so attractive for White, since he must lose a tempo with his bishop when it recaptures on QB4; for example 8 N × B (or 8 P × B P × BP 9 B × P Q–B2 with active play for Black) 8 . . . P × QP 9 KP × P P × P 10 B × P N–B3 11 B–K3 P–QN3 and Black has no real difficulties.

6 . . . P–Q4
7 O–O



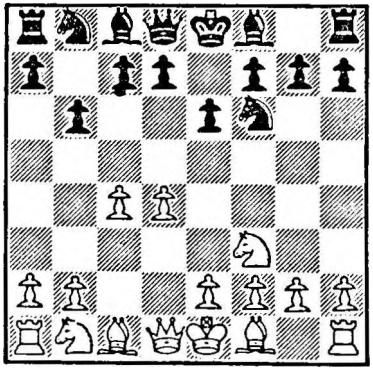
This is the normal position of the Nimzo-Indian Defence. Black has now succeeded in restricting White to a more humble development than in the Queen's Gambit, and has now even

occupied the centre. The problem remains, however, to justify the position of his bishop on QN5. Either he must exchange it for the knight, leaving White with the bishop pair, or he must open the position in order to create a good retreat for it. Two typical continuations are as follows:

(a) Maintaining the bishop by 7 . . . P × BP 8 B × P P × P (8 . . . QN–Q2 9 P–QR3 B–R4 is another complex possibility) 9 P × P P–QN3 leads to a position akin to the Queen's Gambit Accepted. After 10 B–KN5 B–N2 11 R–K1 (or 11 N–K5 B–K2 12 R–K1 QN–Q2) 11 . . . QN–Q2 12 R–QB1 R–B1 13 B–Q3 White has a promising attacking position, though Black can still hope to exploit the isolated pawn after a period on the defensive.

(b) 7 . . . N–B3 8 P–QR3 B × N (8 . . . P × BP 9 B × P P × P 10 P × B P × N 11 Q × Q R × Q 12 P × P gives White a favourable ending) 9 P × B P × BP 10 B × P Q–B2 is Black's most active continuation. He prepares . . . P–K4 and opens the possibility of discovered attacks on the QB-file. After 11 B–Q3 P–K4 Black's initiative makes it hard for White to realize the potential of his bishops. The tenth game of the Portisch–Spassky match, 1977, is a good example of how Black should handle the position: 12 Q–B2 R–K1 13 P × KP N × P 14 N × N Q × N 15 P–B3 B–Q2 16 P–QR4 QR–Q1 17 P–K4 B–B3 18 B–QB4 (18 P–KB4 Q–Q3 would have lost White material) 18 . . . R–Q2 19 Q–N3 KR–Q1 20 R–R2 N–R4 21 P–N3 (otherwise 21 . . . N–B5 develops Black's initiative) 21 . . . N × P! 22 P × N R–Q7! 23 R × R R × R 24 B × R Q × P ch 25 K–R1 Q–R6 ch 26 K–N1 Q–N6 ch drawn by perpetual check. A good example of how bishop and knight can fight against the bishop pair in an open position if they can maintain the initiative.

THE QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENCE: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–KB3 P–QN3



After the moves 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3, White's 3 N–KB3 indicates a desire to avoid the Nimzo-Indian. Black can still play 3 . . . B–N5 ch, but after 4 QN–Q2 he can easily find himself having to exchange bishop for knight without having the compensation of doubling the white pawns. Also after 3 . . . B–N5 ch 4 B–Q2 the exchange of bishops does not help Black's task of fighting for the centre. Therefore the bishop check is not very popular, and Black usually seeks other development plans. Since the move 3 N–KB3 does not immediately threaten central domination with P–K4 in the way that 3 N–QB3 does, Black has greater options. In the Queen's Indian, he takes the chance of developing his queen's bishop actively on the long diagonal. The plan of development for Black is B–N2, B–K2 and O–O, maintaining guard over the important central white squares.

4 P–KN3

White prepares to oppose bishops on the long diagonal. This is a natural counter to Black's scheme, though there are other popular systems:

(a) 4 N–B3 B–N2 5 B–N5 plays for quick and straightforward development, while inviting transposition back to the Queen's

Gambit should Black decide to play P–Q4. The simplest reply is 5 . . . P–KR3 6 B–R4 P–KN4 (6 . . . B–N5 is also good, leading to a type of Nimzo-Indian) 7 B–N3 N–R4 8 Q–B2 N × B 9 RP × N N–B3; Black prepares long castling, with fully adequate chances.

(b) 4 P–QR3 hopes for such a continuation as 4 . . . B–N2 5 N–B3 B–K2 6 P–Q5, shutting out the bishop. Note that this cannot be done without the cautious pawn move, since White would be unable to maintain his centre after . . . B–QN5. Instead of allowing the advance of the white QP, Black should play P–Q4 at move 4 or 5, leading to a type of Queen's Gambit in which White's P–QR3 is of doubtful value.

(c) 4 P–K3 B–N2 5 B–Q3 is a quiet, but strategically complex system. After 5 . . . B–K2 6 O–O O–O 7 P–QN3 P–B4 8 B–N2 P–Q4 9 Q–K2 White aims for a promising attacking position which would be given to him by 9 . . . P × QP 10 KP × P P × P 11 P × P when Black has constantly to be on his guard against the advance of White's QP. Note that White does well to delay the development of his QN in this system. After 9 . . . N–B3 White should play 10 QN–Q2, since 10 N–B3 is answered by 10 . . . P × QP 11 KP × P P × P 12 P × P N–QN5 13 B–N1 B × N and 14 . . . Q × P. On the other hand 9 . . . QN–Q2 is met best by 10 N–B3 since the pawn exchanges no longer worry White. In view of the attacking potential of White's forces in these lines, there is much to be said for Black adopting a more aggressive stance from the outset: 5 . . . P–Q4 6 P–QN3 B–Q3 7 O–O O–O 8 B–N2 QN–Q2 9 QN–Q2 Q–K2 is an attractive scheme, meeting 10 Q–K2 with 10 . . . N–K5 or 10 Q–B2 with 10 . . . P–B4. By keeping his own options open, Black makes it harder for White to formulate an effective plan of development. In such positions, where pawn exchanges by either side can lead to a whole series of different types of position, one can never leave all one's pieces ideally placed for all eventualities. The only correct play is to keep as much flexibility as possible, until the time is right for central liquidation of tension.

4 . . . B–N2

The strange-looking 4 . . . B–R3 is also playable, taking advantage of the fact that the white QBP is undefended. After 5 Q–R4 (5 P–N3 B–N5 ch 6 B–Q2 B–K2! 7 B–N2 P–Q4 8 N–K5 O–O 9 O–O P–B3 – now the bishop on Q2 interferes with the defence of the QP – 10 B–QB3 KN–Q2 gives Black equality at least) 5 . . . P–B4 6 B–N2 B–N2 Black's sacrifice of a move has lured the white queen to a square from which it no longer protects the QP. 7 O–O P × P 8 N × P B × B 9 K × B Q–B1 leaves Black with active prospects of counterplay; White's space advantage can only be maintained by preparing P–K4, after which his own white squares are weakened. A difficult position to handle for both sides.

5 B–N2 B–K2

The attempt to strike immediately in the centre with 5 . . . P–B4 is strongly met by 6 P–Q5! P × P 7 N–R4; White regains his pawn with advantage thanks to the mobile centre pawns and blocking of the black bishop's diagonal.

6 O–O

6 N–B3 N–K5! 7 Q–B2 N × N 8 Q × N O–O 9 O–O leads back to the main line. Note that 6 N–B3 O–O is less satisfactory for Black since 7 Q–B2 prevents the knight occupying its central post and threatens 8 P–K4. 7 . . . P–Q4 is met by 8 P × P P × P 9 B–B4, while 7 . . . P–B4 8 P–Q5 P × P 9 N–KN5 also gives Black great trouble.

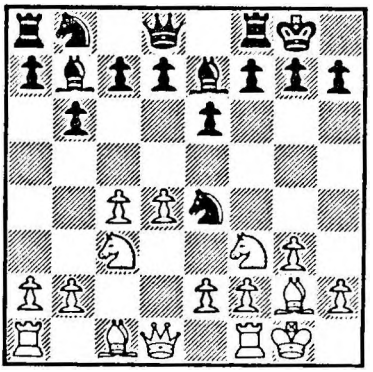
6 . . . O–O

7 N–B3 N–K5! (see diagram opposite)

7 . . . P–Q4 8 N–K5 QN–Q2 9 P × P P × P 10 Q–R4 is very uncomfortable for Black. This knight move is what gives the Queen's Indian its vitality.

8 Q–B2

8 N × N B × N 9 N–K1 (or 9 P–Q5 B–B3 with active play) 9 . . . P–Q4 gives Black no difficulties in equalizing. Also 8 B–Q2 is rather ineffective: 8 . . . B–KB3 9 Q–B2 N × B



10 Q × N P–Q3 11 P–K4 N–Q2 and Black's solid position and bishop pair give him nothing to fear.

8 . . . N × N

The knight must be exchanged since 8 . . . P–KB4 9 N–K5 is clearly in White's favour.

9 Q × N

9 N–N5? does not work; after 9 . . . N × P ch! Black wins material. Also the inconsistent 9 P × N?! (threatening 10 N–N5!) gains no advantage: 9 . . . P–KB4 10 P–Q5 Q–B1! 11 N–Q4 P–B4 12 N–N3 P–Q3 and Black has a reliable position with good prospects of activity, both on the wings and in the centre.

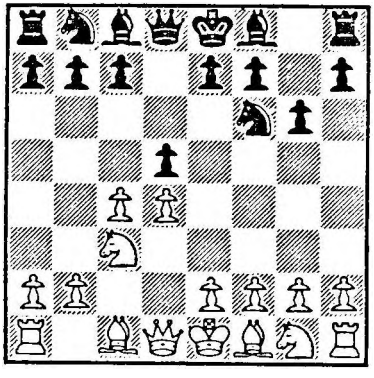
9 . . . P–KB4

Black intensifies his control of the white squares, and prepares to complete his development with B–KB3 followed by either P–Q3 and N–Q2 or N–QB3. Experience shows that his chances of pressure against the white centre are fully sufficient. For example, 10 P–N3 (10 P–Q5 B–KB3 11 Q–B2 P–B3! destroys the centre and equalizes comfortably for Black) 10 . . . B–KB3 11 B–N2 N–B3!? (11 . . . P–Q3 is the alternative) 12 QR–Q1 Q–K2 13 Q–Q2 N–Q1 and Black's forces communicate harmoniously after . . . N–B2. As always Black has been careful not to allow White to gain anything by the

advance of his QP; the immediate 14 P–Q5 is well met by 14 . . . B × B 15 Q × B P–Q3 and White has only hampered his own bishop.

In general it may be said that the Queen's Indian gives Black fully adequate chances, though both sides have a more restricted range of possibilities than in the more complex Nimzo-Indian.

THE GRÜNFELD DEFENCE: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 P–Q4



This is the first of the modern defences to 1 P–Q4. The traditional attitude towards the centre, occupation by pawns, is abandoned and White is challenged to set up a big centre himself with 4 P × P N × P 5 P–K4. Black then hopes that his bishop, about to be placed on the long black diagonal, will provide immediate counterplay in conjunction with a pawn attack by means of P–QB4.

In practice, the Grünfeld Defence can lead to play of varying character, depending largely on what happens to the central pawns. The three main themes are the following:

(a) Exchange of centre pawns, either by White playing P × QP, or Black playing P × BP, followed by P–K4 by White. This

leads to the thematic play of Black relying on piece mobility to attack the white centre.

(b) White refrains from immediate capture and Black supports the pawn with . . . P–QB3 or P–K3. This results in a far more quiet game, with much in common with some Slav Defence positions.

(c) White develops his pieces and Black plays the counter-thrust . . . P–QB4. In that case we have general liquidation in the centre with both sides relying on fluid piece play.

All these themes will recur in the lines which follow.

A: The Exchange Variation: 4 P × P N × P 5 P–K4

This is White's most dynamic and challenging continuation. As we shall see, Black is well placed to put pressure on the central pawns.

5 . . . N × N

Although this brings a white pawn to the support of the centre, it is better than retreating the knight. After 5 . . . N–N3 that piece has no great effect on the central play and White can gain advantage with 6 P–KR3! B–N2 7 N–B3 O–O 8 B–K3. Black has no good method to challenge the centre. Note how important it is for White to avoid the pin on his knight with the preliminary P–KR3. Without this move . . . B–KN5 would impose great strain on the defences of the QP.

6 P × N B–N2

6 . . . P–QB4 may be played first if Black wishes, but there is no harm in delaying it. The attempt to prevent the advance of the black QBP with 7 B–R3 is simply met now by 7 . . . N–Q2 followed by P–QB4 anyway, leaving the bishop on R3 looking badly placed.

7 B–QB4

7 N–B3 P–QB4 8 B–K2 N–B3 9 B–K3 B–N5 forces White to take an unwelcome decision about his centre. That White

cannot maintain his pawns on K4 and Q4 by such simple developing means is one of the main justifications for the Grünfeld Defence.

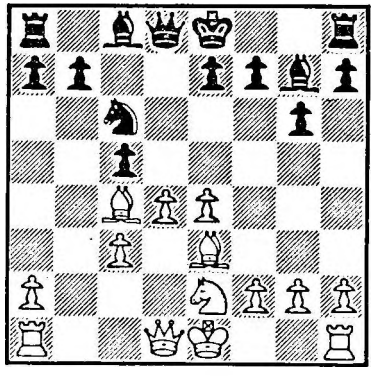
7 . . . P–QB4

Black can also delay this move with 7 . . . O–O 8 N–K2 and now 8 . . . N–B3 or 8 . . . P–N3 are sometimes played, hoping for active piece play and later direct action in the centre with . . . P–QB4 or P–K4.

8 N–K2!

Knight and bishop must both be able to support the QP unmolested, so the knight belongs on K2 where it cannot be pinned.

8 . . . N–B3
9 B–K3



With eight pieces attacking or supporting the white QP, there is a great deal of tension about that square, but Black is unable to bring more pressure to bear. He has, nevertheless, several other plans to fight for the initiative. Here are some typical ideas:

(a) 9 . . . P × P 10 P × P Q–R4 ch 11 B–Q2 Q–R6 is tricky but not convincing; White retains advantage with 12 R–QN1! (to meet 12 . . . N × P with 13 B–N4!) 12 . . . O–O 13 O–O! (not 13 P–Q5 N–K4 14 B–N4 Q–B6! 15 P × Q N × P ch

16 K–B1 B–R6 mate) and White is now ready to push Black backwards with P–Q5.

(b) 9 . . . O–O 10 O–O P × P 11 P × P B–N5 12 P–B3 N–R4 13 B–Q3 (13 R–B1 N × B 14 R × N B–Q2 gives a quieter game, but the black bishop pair should be enough to give equal chances) 13 . . . B–K3 keeps the centre under restraint and virtually forces White to part with material if he wishes to develop any initiative. The main options are 14 R–B1 B × RP 15 P–Q5, hoping to exploit the tangle of Black Q-side pieces; and 14 P–Q5!? B × R 15 Q × B P–B3 when White retains promising attacking chances though decades of analysis have shown the defence to be remarkably resilient

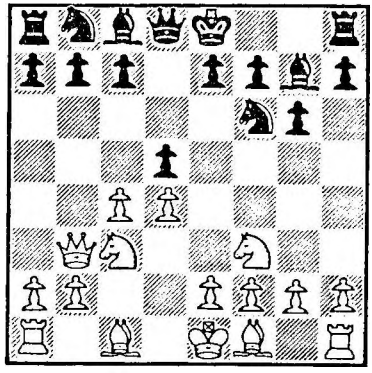
(c) 9 . . . O–O 10 O–O Q–B2 sets up threats of a discovered attack on the bishop (11 . . . P × P 12 P × P N × P!) while preparing to bring the rook to Q1. After 11 R–B1 R–Q1 12 Q–Q2 (12 P–B4 is a very sharp alternative, met by either 12 . . . B–N5 or 12 . . . P–K3) 12 . . . Q–R4! 13 KR–Q1 B–Q2 Black's possibilities of exchanging queens after . . . P × QP reduce White's attacking options. One line of analysis from this position proceeds 14 B–KR6 P × P 15 B × B K × B 16 Q–B4! P × P! 17 Q × P ch K–R1 18 R–Q5 Q–N5 19 N–B4 Q × B 20 N × P ch P × N 21 Q × NP (or 21 R–R5 ch P × R 22 Q × Q P–K4 23 Q × P N–Q5 with good play for Black) 21 . . . B–N5! and White has only a draw by perpetual check. That sort of sudden White attack is quite typical of the Grünfeld Exchange Variation, but Black's resources, as in this case, usually prove to be adequate.

Other Systems Against the Grünfeld

A: The Russian System: 4 N–B3 B–N2 5 Q–N3

(see diagram overleaf)

White puts pressure on the black QP to induce surrender of the centre. It is also possible to play Q–N3 a move earlier, though after 4 Q–N3 P × P 5 Q × BP Black has the additional



possibility of 5 . . . B–K3! 6 Q–N5 ch B–Q2 7 Q × P B–B3 winning back the QP (8 Q–N4 P–K4!) with an active position.

5 . . . P × P

5 . . . P–B3 is rather passive here and leaves White with the better game after 6 P × P! P × P (6 . . . N × P 7 P–K4 favours White) 7 B–N5 P–K3 8 P–K3.

6 Q × BP O–O
7 P–K4

White has succeeded in setting up his big centre, but the exposed position of his queen gives added possibilities of Black counter-attack. Play from this position can become very sharp as may be judged from the following variations:

(a) 7 . . . P–B3 leads to active play for Black after 8 B–K2 P–QN4 9 Q–N3 Q–R4 10 B–Q2 P–N5 11 N–QR4 N × P 12 B × P Q–B2. White has better chances of advantage by anticipating the Q-side pawn advance with 8 Q–N3! when 8 . . . P–QN4 is strongly met by 9 P–K5 N–K1 (9 . . . N–Q4 now loses a pawn, while 9 . . . B–K3 is met by 10 P × N! B × Q 11 BP × B and the three pieces are better than the queen) 10 P–QR4! Black does better to play 8 . . . P–K4!? rather than 8 . . . P–QN4, though after 9 P × P N–N5 10 B–K2 White's position is still somewhat preferable.

(b) 7 . . . P–QR3!? is another way to attempt a Q-side pawn

advance. After 8 Q–N3 (both 8 B–B4 P–QN4! 9 Q × BP Q × Q 10 B × Q B–N2 11 P–K5 N–Q4, and 8 P–QR4 P–QN4! 9 Q–N3 P–B4! 10 QP × P B–K3 11 Q–R3 P–N5! 12 Q × P N–B3 leave Black with a strong initiative) 8 . . . P–QN4 9 P–K5 KN–Q2 10 B–K3 N–N3 11 QR–Q1 B–N2 Black's control of the central white squares gives him adequate chances.

(c) 7 . . . N–R3 introduces possibilities of counterplay with . . . P–B4. There can follow 8 B–K2 (8 B–N5 P–B4 9 P–Q5 leads to a sharper game) 8 . . . P–B4 9 P–Q5 (9 P × P B–K3 10 Q–N5 R–B1 gives Black a strong initiative) 9 . . . P–K3 10 B–N5 Q–N3 (10 . . . P × P 11 N × P leaves Black in difficulties) 11 O–O P × P 12 P × P P–R3 13 B–B4 R–K1 with open lines for all the pieces and a sharp, fluid game.

(d) 7 . . . B–N5 8 B–K3 KN–Q2 is a subtle plan introduced by the former World Champion, Smyslov. Black plays his knights to QN3 and QB3 to exert pressure on the centre. A typical continuation is 9 R–Q1 (9 O–O–O N–N3 10 Q–N3 P–QR4 is fine for Black) 9 . . . N–N3 10 Q–N3 N–B3 (or the very solid 10 . . . P–K3 keeping the centre under restraint) 11 P–Q5 N–K4 12 B–K2 N × N ch 13 P × N B–R4 with a double-edged position. White has more space, but his king has nowhere safe. Black must organize counterplay by moving his queen and playing P–QB3. Chances seem about equal.

B: **The Classical System: 4 B–B4** (see diagram overleaf)

White plans straightforward development, with a quick R–QB1 to discourage Black from striking in the centre with . . . P–QB4. As we shall see, that move cannot completely be prevented.

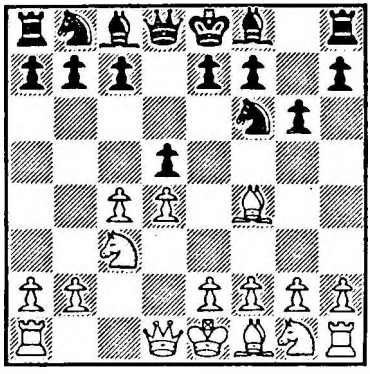
4 . . . B–N2

5 P–K3 O–O

Black can also play the solid 5 . . . P–B3 or the immediate 5 . . . P–B4 6 QP × P Q–R4 with complications.

6 R–B1

Accepting the offered pawn with 6 P × P N × P 7 N × N



Q × N 8 B × P gives Black a dangerous attack: 8 . . . N–B3 (8 . . . N–R3 is also possible) 9 N–K2 B–N5 10 P–B3 QR–B1! 11 N–B3 (or 11 B–B4 P–K4 12 P × P Q–R4 ch with a powerful initiative) 11 . . . Q–K3 12 B–KB4 N × P! 13 P × B KR–Q1. Even after the best defensive moves, 14 B–Q3! N–B3 15 Q–N1! N–K4 Black retains enough attack for the piece.

6 . . . P–B4

The thematic Grünfeld response, breaking open the long black diagonal.

7 QP × P B–K3!

By this temporary pawn sacrifice, Black ensures himself active play. White can hardly afford 8 P × P N × P 9 N × N B × N when his development lag and Q-side weaknesses leave him very badly placed. The best course is to continue bringing out pieces with 8 N–B3 N–B3 9 B–K2 N–K5! with equal chances. For example, 10 P × P N × N 11 P × N B × P or 10 O–O N × N 11 P × N P × P or 10 N–Q4 QN × N 11 P × N N × N 12 P × N P × P.

c: Systems with B–KN5

The early B–KN5 by White is always well met by . . . N–K5. For example:

(a) 1 **P–Q4 N–KB3** 2 **P–QB4 P–KN3** 3 **N–QB3 P–Q4**

4 B–N5 N–K5! 5 B–R4 (both 5 N × N P × N 6 Q–Q2 B–N2 7 O–O–O P–KR3 8 B–B4 P–QB4 and 5 P × P N × B 6 P–KR4 N–K5! 7 N × N Q × P give Black some advantage) 5 . . . P–QB4 6 P × QP N × N 7 P × N Q × P 8 P–K3 P × P 9 Q × P Q × Q 10 BP × Q P–K3 with an even end-game.

(b) 1 **P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 P–Q4 4 N–B3 B–N2 5 B–N5 N–K5!** 6 P × P N × B 7 N × N P–K3 and Black regains his pawn with equal chances. There can follow 8 N–B3 P × P 9 P–K3, when White intends to play for a minority attack on the Q-side. In that case Black's chances lie on the other wing. Alternatively White can adopt more complicated tactics with 8 Q–Q2 P × P (8 . . . P–KR3 is safe) 9 Q–K3 ch K–B1 10 Q–B4 B–B3 11 P–KR4 P–KR3 12 N–B3 B–K3 when the black bishop pair makes up for the minor inconvenience caused to the king.

D: Systems with P–K3

White's least ambitious lines begin 1 **P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–BQ4 P–KN3** 3 **N–QB3 P–Q4 4 N–B3 B–N2 5 P–K3 O–O.** The idea is simply to maintain a solid stand in the centre, trying to restrict the influence of the fianchettoed bishop. As usual, Black can support his QP with . . . P–B3, but the more ambitious . . . P–QB4 is still playable in most cases. Some examples:

(a) 6 **B–K2** P–B4 7 QP × P Q–R4 8 P × P N × P! 9 Q × N B × N ch 10 B–Q2 R–Q1 and White is left with the choice between 11 B × B Q × B ch 12 P × Q R × Q when Black has the better end-game thanks to his superior pawn structure, and the dubious queen sacrifice 11 Q × R ch Q × Q 12 B × B Q–B2. In the latter case, White has enough play for the queen, but no more.

(b) 6 **B–Q2** P–B4 7 QP × P N–R3 8 P × P N × BP! is more tricky for Black, since he does not regain his pawn immediately. However, after 9 B–B4 P–QR3 10 P–QR4 B–B4 11 O–O R–B1 12 Q–K2 KN–K5! 13 N–Q4 N × B 14 Q × N

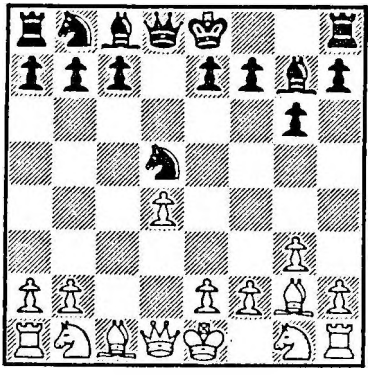
N–K5 15 N × N QB × N Black finally succeeds in recouping the investment with an equal game. Analysis of this line shows that White cannot hope to maintain his extra pawn, so Black's . . . P–QB4 justifies itself by liquidating the centre and opening the long black diagonal.

(c) 6 **P × P N × P 7 B–B4** resolves the central tension and develops quickly for White. Again Black's counterplay is based on . . . P–QB4. After either 7 . . . N × N 8 P × N P–B4 9 O–O Q–B2 10 Q–K2 N–B3 11 B–R3 N–R4 12 B–Q3 P–N3 or 7 . . . N–N3 8 B–N3 P–B4 9 O–O (9 P × P Q × Q ch 10 B × Q KN–Q2 11 N–Q5 N–QB3 gives difficulties only to White) 9 . . . P × P 10 P × P the position is level; White's extra freedom for his pieces compensates for the isolated pawn.

E: Systems with B–KN2

After 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 P–Q4, the continuation 4 P × P N × P 5 P–KN3 poses Black few problems, since 5 . . . B–N2 6 B–N2 N × N 7 P × N P–QB4 8 P–K3 O–O gives him an easy game. The usual developing scheme of . . . Q–B2, N–B3 and N–QR4 has the additional bonus of the unprotected QB5 square beckoning. Therefore, if White wants to fianchetto the K-bishop, he does better to omit the move N–QB3. In that case we reach what is sometimes called the 'neo-Grünfeld' after the moves 1 **P–Q4 N–KB3** 2 **P–QB4 P–KN3** 3 **P–KN3 B–N2** (3 . . . P–B3 4 B–N2 P–Q4 is another very solid approach) 4 **B–N2 P–Q4** 5 **P × P N × P** (see diagram opposite).

Black must keep the centre under surveillance by his minor pieces, then undermine it with the QB- and K-pawns. For example 6 N–KB3 (or 6 P–K4 N–N3 7 N–K2 O–O 8 O–O P–K4 9 P–Q5 N–B5 10 P–N3 N–Q3 with equal chances; 6 P–K4 N–N5!? is the more complicated alternative) 6 . . . O–O 7 O–O N–N3 (7 . . . P–QB4 8 P × P N–R3 is another equalizing attempt, though White's pawns are healthier after 9 P–B6 P × P) 8 N–B3 N–B3 9 P–K3 (9 P–Q5 N–R4

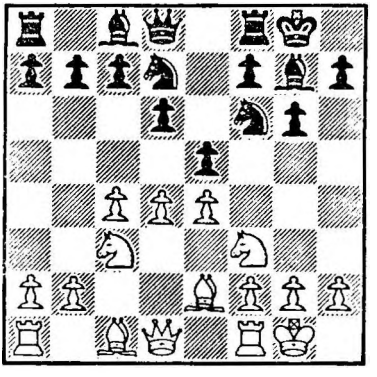


10 P–K4 P–QB3! begins to snipe at the centre; the knight at QR4 is rerouted via B5 to Q3) 9 . . . P–K4 10 P–Q5 N–K2 11 P–K4 B–N5 followed by . . . P–QB3 and Black keeps an equal game. Either of his knights is poised to reach the important blockading square on Q3.

THE KING'S INDIAN DEFENCE

As in the Grünfeld, Black's development in the King's Indian is based on a K-side fianchetto, but the central strategy is totally different. White is given a free hand in the centre during the early moves, with Black aiming to hit back later on the black squares. His development scheme is N–KB3, P–KN3, B–N2, O–O, P–Q3 followed by P–K4 (or sometimes . . . P–QB4). The King's Indian in fact developed from the Old Indian Defence, 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–Q3 3 N–QB3 P–K4 4 N–B3 (4 P × P P × P 5 Q × Q ch K × Q gives no advantage) 4 . . . QN–Q2 5 P–K4 (or 5 P–KN3) 5 . . . B–K2. It was later realized that the bishop is better placed on KN2 where, first, it is prepared to become active on the long diagonal after . . . KP × P, and secondly, in the case of P–Q5 by White, the pawn on KN3 supports Black's natural advance P–KB4. Before proceeding to look at specific variations, we should make some general observations. After a typical series

of opening moves, 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 B–N2 4 P–K4 P–Q3 5 N–B3 O–O 6 B–K2 P–K4 7 O–O QN–Q2, the respective strategies of White and Black depend to a large extent on what happens in the centre.



There are three possibilities to release the tension:

(1) *White captures P × KP:* after Black retakes with the pawn, White is left with a weak square on Q4 and generally weak black squares. Black will try to bring a knight to Q5. This idea is generally bad for White and only worth considering at all if there is an opportunity to gain Q-side space with P–QB5 to compensate for the weak central square.

(2) *Black captures . . . P × QP:* this opens the diagonal for his bishop, gives possibilities of pressure on the K-file and attractive squares at K4 and QB4 for the knights. Nevertheless, it does surrender the centre and will demand vigorous play by Black if he is not to be forced back by an eventual P–QN4 or P–KB4 by White. Often . . . P × QP is played only after a preliminary . . . P–QB3, when Black has the additional possibility of central liquidation with P–Q4.

(3) *White closes the centre with P–Q5:* this changes the character totally and shifts attention on to the wings. Black aims for a general advance on the K-side, beginning with P–KB4, while White hopes to force P–QB5, intending to squash Black on the Q-side.

Now let us see how these ideas are put into action in the different variations:

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–KN3
3 N–QB3 B–N2
4 P–K4

White, of course, need not accept the challenge of full central occupation immediately. A less ambitious system, involving P–K3, is 4 N–B3 O–O 5 B–N5 P–Q3 6 P–K3, but Black secures good chances with 6 . . . P–KR3 7 B–R4 P–KN4 8 B–N3 N–R4 followed by P–K3 and P–KB4 rather than exacerbating the white-square weaknesses by plugging on with the old . . . P–K4 plan. We shall see later systems in which White plays B–KN5 under circumstances where the bishop is less vulnerable to chase and exchange.

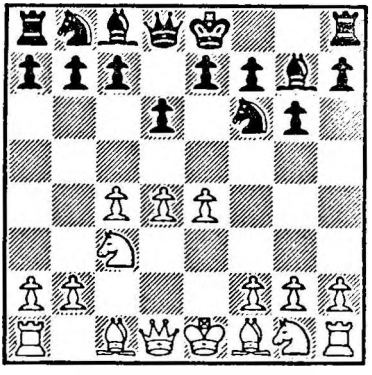
The main alternative to an early P–K4 for White is a K-side fianchetto. Often this is played as soon as move 3 to avoid some Grünfeld Defence variations. After 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 P–KN3 B–N2 4 B–N2 O–O 5 N–QB3 P–Q3 6 N–B3 Black has a whole range of options:

(a) The classical King's Indian plan: 6 . . . QN–Q2 7 O–O P–K4 8 P–K4 P–B3 (8 . . . P × P 9 N × P leaves the white KP well protected and reduces Black's chances of counterplay; the capture is better delayed) 9 P–KR3 (preventing Black's N–N5 after B–K3) 9 . . . R–K1 10 B–K 3 P–QR4. Black is ready to meet 11 P–Q5 with N–B4, while he also envisages a further advance of the QRP. White will play Q–B2 and QR–Q1, trying to induce Black to surrender the centre with . . . P × P. White's central space ought to give him some advantage, but Black's active minor pieces cannot easily be denied counter-chances.

(b) 6 . . . P–B4 is an alternative method of striking in the centre. There can follow 7 P–Q5 N–R3 8 O–O N–B2 9 P–QR4 P–QR3 and Black tries to prepare the advance of his QNP. We shall meet positions of this type in the Benoni. White can prepare slowly for a central breakthrough with P–K4 and P–K5.

(c) 6 . . . N–B3 7 O–O P–QR3 is an interesting idea based on the undefended state of the white QBP. Black intends R–QN1 and P–QN4, exchanging the white QBP and thereby removing its important central influence. The usual continuation is 8 P–Q5 N–QR4 9 N–Q2 P–B4 10 Q–B2 when Black has the choice between 10 . . . R–N1 11 P–N3 P–QN4 and 10 . . . P–K4 anticipating White's plans for an eventual central advance. The black knight on QR4 can become a liability in such positions, but White too has pieces to untangle.

4 . . . P–Q3



Now White must decide how to develop his pieces and in what manner he will react to Black's impending P–K4. The different possible approaches are exemplified in the most important variations which we now discuss.

A: The Classical Variation: 5 B–K2 O–O 6 N–B3 P–K4

Now 7 P × P P × P 8 Q × Q R × Q 9 N × P (or 9 B–N5 R–K1) 9 . . . N × P! gives White nothing, so there are two main choices and two variants:

(a) 7 P–Q5 QN–Q2 8 B–N5 is an interesting idea originated by former World Champion Petrosian. White hopes to exploit the weak white squares after 8 . . . P–KR3 9 B–R4 P–KN4

10 B–N3. Instead, Black does better to preserve more flexibility with 7 . . . P–QR4 (instead of QN–Q2) 8 B–N5 P–R3 9 B–R4 N–R3 10 N–Q2 Q–K1 11 O–O B–Q2 12 P–QN3 (12 P–QR3 P–R5 leaves the Q-side blocked) 12 . . . N–R2 and Black is ready for . . . P–KB4 (possibly even preceded by P–KR4 and B–R3).

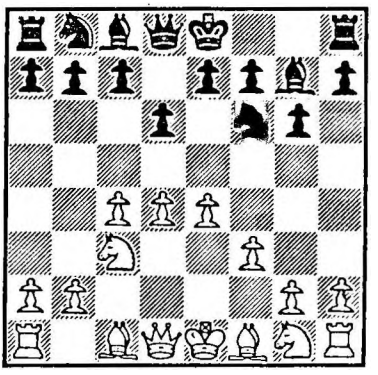
(b) 7 P–Q5 P–QR4 8 O–O QN–Q2 9 Q–B2 N–B4 (or 7 O–O QN–Q2 8 P–Q5 N–B4 9 Q–B2 P–QR4) is a rather rigid system for White, but Black must be careful how he prepares his counterplay with . . . P–KB4. There can follow 10 B–N5 P–R3 11 B–K3 (11 B–R4 P–KN4 12 B–N3 N–R4 is here good for Black; the knight comes strongly to KB5) 11 . . . P–N3 (11 . . . N–R4 12 P–KN3! P–B4 13 N–KR4! shows up the weaknesses in the black camp, incidentally explaining why . . . P–KR3 was induced) 12 N–Q2 N–N5 and Black secures an equal game after the exchange of a white bishop.

(c) 7 O–O QN–Q2 8 R–K1 has much in common with the similar position where the white bishop is developed to KN2. The difference here is that the white KP is less well protected, but his QBP and general Q-side white squares better so. After 8 . . . P–B3 9 B–B1 P–QR4 a waiting game ensues, with both sides trying to provoke a central decision. White's most effective waiting move now is probably 10 R–N1!? removing the rook from the long diagonal and envisaging a later Q-side push with P–QN3, P–QR3 and P–QN4. After 10 R–N1 R–K1 it is time for 11 P–Q5, when the black rook is misplaced on K1.

(d) 7 O–O N–B3 puts immediate pressure on the white QP and forces immediate decision. Neither 8 P × P P × P nor 8 B–K3 R–K1 gives White anything, so 8 P–Q5 N–K2 is the normal continuation. Now all is set for the two sides to play their pawn advances. A typical progression is 9 N–K1 N–Q2 10 N–Q3 P–KB4 11 B–Q2 N–KB3 12 P–B3 P–B5 13 P–B5 P–KN4 14 QR–B1 N–N3 15 P × P P × P 16 N–N5 R–B2 17 Q–B2 N–K1 18 P–QR4 P–KR4 and both sides must keep

a precise balance between attack and defence. This type of line is typical of the King's Indian.

B: The Sämisch Variation: 5 P–B3



White's plan here is very aggressive. He intends to close the centre with P–Q5 after Black's P–K4, then play for a direct K-side attack with B–K3, Q–Q2 and advance of the pawns on that wing. The pawn at KB3 prevents Black from meeting B–K3 with N–N5, while also acting as a preparation for a later P–KN4.

5 . . . O–O

Black can also initiate immediate Q-side activity with 5 . . . P–B3 6 B–K3 P–QR3 intending a quick P–QN4. The reasoning here is that White's P–KB3 is more suitable for maintaining a static centre than initiating the type of central action which might punish such a black wing advance. Nevertheless 7 B–Q3 P–QN4 (the preparatory 7 . . . QN–Q2 is also playable) 8 P–K5 KN–Q2 9 P–B4 is still a critical continuation. Also possible for White is 7 P–QR4, stopping the intended advance. Black then continues 7 . . . P–QR4! followed by N–R3 and N–QN5. Note that Black's adoption of this plan is safer if he leaves his king in the centre. Such a sequence as

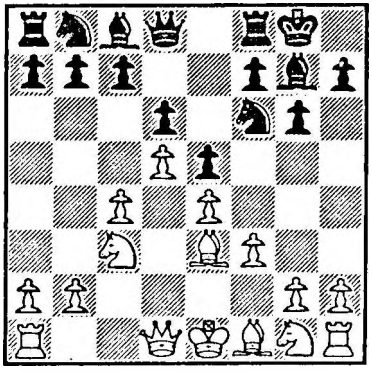
5 . . . O–O 6 B–K3 P–B3 7 Q–Q2 P–QR3 would encourage immediate attacking plans with 8 O–O–O or 8 P–KR4.

6 B–K3 P–K4

Another interesting idea of Q-side play is 6 . . . N–B3. Black prepares P–QR3, R–N1 and P–QN4, while retaining the option of playing P–K4. After 7 Q–Q2 P–QR3 (7 . . . P–K4 8 P–Q5 N–Q5 is met by 9 KN–K2! rather than 9 B × N? P × B 10 Q × P N × KP!) 8 KN–K2 R–N1 9 P–KR4 P–QN4 Black has the makings of counterplay, but must still be very careful about the white attack and ready to react in the centre. 10 B–R6 is met by 10 . . . P–K4 and White does not find it easy to develop his attack in the face of pressure on his centre and Q-side.

7 P–Q5

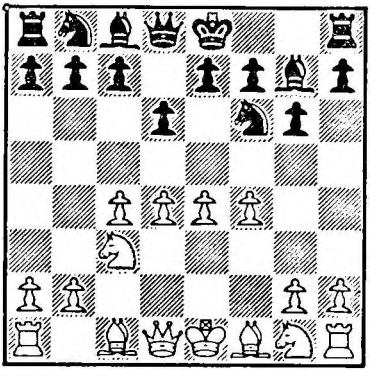
As usual exchanging pawns and queens gives White nothing: 7 P × P P × P 8 Q × Q R × Q 9 N–Q5 N × N 10 BP × N P–QB3 11 B–QB4 P–QN4 12 B–N3 B–N2 13 R–B1 P–QR4 and Black has a good game. With P–Q5 White closes the centre to allow himself the luxury of a pawn advance on the K-side.



In this position, Black is faced with the problem of obtaining counterplay against the automatic attacking plan of Q–Q2, O–O–O, P–KR4, B–R6 and P–R5, as is familiar from the Dragon Sicilian. His main weapon is the thematic advance

. . . P–KB4, though White's advantage in space ought to enable him to retain some advantage. For example:
(a) 7 . . . N–R4 8 Q–Q2 P–KB4 9 O–O–O P–B5 10 B–B2 B–B3 11 KN–K2 B–R5 12 B–N1 and White changes plans to ■ Q-side offensive with P–QB5, prepared, if necessary, by K–N1 and R–QB1.
(b) 7 . . . P–B3 delays the K-side play in favour of opening the QB-file. Now 8 B–Q3 can be met by 8 . . . P–QN4!? when 9 P × NP P × QP 10 P × P B–N2 gives Black great activity. Therefore White continues as normal with 8 Q–Q2 P × P 9 BP × P N–R3 when Black is better prepared to react quickly against White's Q-side castling. 10 B–Q3 (10 P–KN4 is difficult to justify after 10 . . . P–R4! a common defensive resource in this variation) 10 . . . B–Q2 11 KN–K2 N–B4 enables Black to stay active.

c: The Four Pawns' Attack: 5 P–B4



This has much in common with the Alekhine's Defence variation of the same name. White tries in both cases to crush through with a roller of pawns, but Black's counterplay always seems sufficient. After 5 . . . O–O 6 N–B3 P–B4! the central counter-attack begins. White has three options:
(a) 7 B–K2 P × P 8 N × P takes much of the power out of

White's centre pawns; Black has a good manoeuvre in 8 . . . N–B3 9 B–K3 KN–N5!? 10 B × N B × N! (not 10 . . . B × B when White wins a pawn with 11 N × N Q–Q2 12 N × P ch) 11 QB × B B × B 12 Q × B N × B 13 Q–Q1 N–B3 and the multiple exchanges have totally taken the sting out of White's position.

(b) 7 P × P is met by 7 . . . Q–R4! a typical King's Indian idea to seize the initiative for Black. Now 8 P × P? N × P would give Black a wonderful position, so White must continue 8 B–Q3 when either 8 . . . Q × BP or 8 . . . KN–Q2!? regains the pawn with an active position.

(c) 7 P–Q5 is the most dynamic move. After 7 . . . P–K3 8 B–K2 P × P 9 BP × P White keeps the chance of further central advance. Black can either play for vigorous counter-action with 9 . . . P–QN4 10 P–K5! (10 B × P N × KP! 11 N × N Q–R4 ch gives Black the initiative) 10 . . . P × P 11 P × P N–N5 with great complications, or less riskily 9 . . . B–N5 10 O–O QN–Q2 and Black keeps a careful watch on his K4-square to restrain the pawns. Such positions are similar to the Modern Benoni, which we come to later. Both sides must be prepared for a sharp battle.

D: The Averbakh System: 5 B–K2 O–O 6 B–N5

The bishop on N5 here prevents Black from playing the desired 6 . . . P–K4, now met by 7 P × P P × P 8 Q × Q R × Q 9 N–Q5! winning material. The role of the other bishop is seen after 6 . . . P–KR3, which is met by 7 B–K3! and Black cannot with 7 . . . N–N5 attack the bishop again. Thus White can continue with Q–Q2, when the attack on the KRP costs Black a tempo.

Black's normal plan therefore is to change to the other method of attacking the centre, 6 . . . P–B4 (6 . . . QN–Q2 followed by P–K4 is also possible) 7 P–Q5 and now either 7 . . . P–K3 or 7 . . . P–KR3 followed by 8 . . . P–K3. White, in either case, must decide what he is to do about the attack on

his QP. If Black is allowed to play P × QP, White can try either a Benoni structure with BP × P, or the solid KP × P aiming for an end-game advantage after exchanges of major pieces on the K-file. Note that 7 . . . P–K3 8 Q–Q2 P × P 9 KP × P leaves Black in some discomfort since he can no longer break the pin with . . . P–KR3. After the immediate 7 . . . P–KR3, however, White can play 8 B–B4, and 8 . . . P–K3 is playable only as a pawn sacrifice: 9 P × P B × P 10 B × P R–K1 with open lines and useful black-square pressure for the pawn.

Although White's strategy in the Averbakh System is relatively unambitious (usually just an end-game advantage), Black finds it difficult to free his game in the above lines and gain the usual King's Indian counterplay. Perhaps the simplest continuation for Black is 6 . . . P–B3 7 Q–Q2 QN–Q2 8 N–B3 P–K4. Black is still faced with the pin on his knight, but has prospects of activity in the centre. Watch out for the trap 9 O–O P × P 10 N × P N–B4 11 P–B3? (11 Q–B4!) KN × P! destroying White's formation.

That concludes our survey of the principal King's Indian variations. There are many other ways in which White can bring out his pieces in this opening, but the ideas remain the same. Black must strike in the centre with P–B4 or P–K4, then react appropriately either to the closing of the centre with P–Q5 by White, or the fluid piece play which can result if the central position is opened.

BENONI SYSTEMS

The last of the defences to 1 P–Q4 which we must discuss in this chapter is a close relative of the King's Indian. The Benoni in its purest form is introduced by the moves 1 **P–Q4 P–QB4** 2 **P–Q5,** when Black usually continues with a K-side fianchetto, leading to positions similar to those which can arise from the King's Indian, but with the important difference that White

need not play P–QB4. In fact, after 2 . . . **P–KN3** 3 **P–K4 P–Q3**, White can adopt a promising formation with 4 **N–QB3 B–N2** 5 **N–B3 N–KB3** 6 **B–K2 O–O** 7 **O–O**. Black is less well placed to regain central ground with 7 . . . P–K3 owing to the reply 8 P × P when neither 8 . . . P × P 9 P–K5 nor 8 . . . B × P 9 N–KN5 is satisfactory. Instead, Black must play for Q-side expansion, but White's central space advantage gives him the preferable position. The last game of the 1978 Karpov–Korchnoi match is a good example of White's correct strategy in such a line: 7 . . . N–R3 8 B–KB4 N–B2 9 P–QR4 P–N3 10 R–K1 B–N2 11 B–B4 N–R4 12 B–KN5 N–B3 13 Q–Q3 P–QR3 14 QR–Q1 R–N1 15 P–R3 N–Q2 16 Q–K3 B–QR1 17 B–R6 P–QN4 18 B × B K × B 19 B–B1 N–B3 20 P × P P × P 21 N–K2! B–N2 22 N–N3 R–QR1 23 P–B3 R–R5 24 B–Q3! Q–R1 25 P–K5! P × P (25 . . . KN × P 26 N–R5 ch! P × N 27 Q–N5 ch K–R1 28 Q–R6 P–B4 29 N–N5 and the attack crushes through) 26 Q × KP N × P 27 B × QNP R–R2 28 N–R4 B–B1 29 B–K2 B–K3 30 P–QB4 N–N5 31 Q × P Q–N1 32 B–B1 R–B1 33 Q–KN5 K–R1 34 R–Q2 N–B3 35 Q–R6 R–N1 36 N–B3 Q–KB1 37 Q–K3 K–N2 38 N–N5 B–Q2 39 P–N4 Q–R1 40 P–N5 N–QR4 41 P–N6 Resigns. A fine example of the efficacy of a central breakthrough against play on the wing.

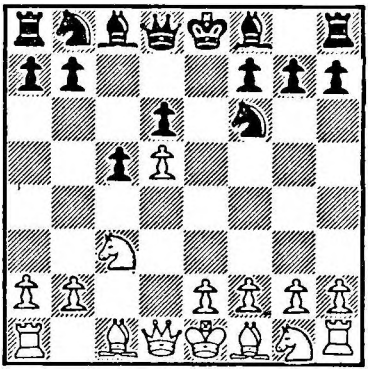
The main lines of the Benoni, therefore, involve Black waiting until P–QB4 has been played before making the thematic P–QB4 response:

1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–B4

Now 3 P × P P–K3 regains the pawn for Black with a perfectly satisfactory game. White can play 3 P–K3 or 3 N–KB3 P × P 4 N × P leading to an English Opening, but the most logical and bold response is to push on with 3 **P–Q5.** White's advanced pawn gives him an advantage in space, but Black has firm control of the dark squares and the long diagonal beckons his bishop. There are three important systems which stem from this position, depending on the central pawn

structure Black wishes to adopt. Usually he makes this crucial decision immediately, rather than develop with 3 . . . P–Q3 4 N–QB3 P–KN3 5 P–K4 B–N2 first. After those moves White has the extra option of 6 B–B4 when Black can only move his KP as a sacrifice of the QP.

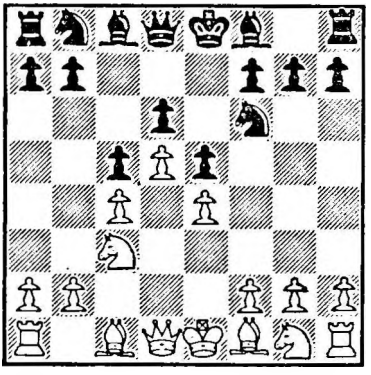
A: The Modern Benoni: 3 . . . P–K3 4 N–QB3 P × P 5 P × P P–Q3



This is strategically one of the sharpest openings of all. The imbalance in pawn structure dictates the course of the game: Black will try to advance his mobile Q-side pawn majority; White must react in the centre with an eventual push of KP and KBP. Possibilities range from the ultra-cautious 6 P–KN3 P–KN3 7 B–N2 B–N2 8 N–B3 O–O 9 O–O R–K1 to such outright refutation attempts as 6 P–K4 P–KN3 7 P–B4 B–N2 8 P–K5 KN–Q2! 9 N–N5 P × P 10 N–Q6 ch K–K2. Generally White adopts a middle-of-the-road course with immediate central occupation, but delaying the breakthrough until it has been suitably prepared. A typical continuation is 6 N–B3 P–KN3 7 N–Q2 (the knight has a beautiful square at QB4, eyeing the black QP) 7 . . . QN–Q2 (to meet 8 N–B4 with 8 . . . N–N3) 8 P–K4 B–N2 9 B–K2 O–O 10 O–O P–QR3 11 P–QR4 (White must prevent P–QN4) 11 . . .

R–K1 12 Q–B2 N–K4. Now 13 P–B4 N(4)–N5 gives Black considerable activity so White must further prepare his central action. Black must always beware of being driven into passivity in this opening, since his ambitious strategy demands activity of the pieces. Above all he must always keep watch on White's centre, while preparing his own action based on the Q-side pawns, long black diagonal and open K-file. White's business is to keep the black pieces under restraint, while preparing to push them back, then crush through in the centre. No easy task for either side; the Modern Benoni is a difficult opening.

B: The Full Benoni: 3 . . . P–K4 4 N–QB3 P–Q3 5 P–K4



Black combines the Benoni with the King's Indian here. He firmly puts a stop to any central action for the time being and prepares to develop his pieces quietly while the central pawn wedge slows things down. As the pawn structure determines, both sides must ultimately play for the thematic pawn breaks. Black wants to play . . . P–KB4 and P–QN4 to gain space; White wants to destroy Black's solid formation also by means of P–QN4 and possibly P–KB4. This latter white break is less easily executed; there is no point in playing P–KB4 unless White already has a pawn on KN3. Such a sequence as 5 . . . P–KN3 6 P–B4? P × P 7 B × P B–N2 is positionally

disastrous for White; all he has done is surrender a beautiful square to the black pieces on K4. After, for example, 8 N–B3 O–O 9 B–Q3 N–R4 10 B–K3 N–Q2 Black would stand clearly better. But to prepare P–KB4 with P–KN3 means that White must make provisions for his King's safety. All this generally proves too cumbersome, so White concentrates on Q-side play based on P–QN4, while sometimes also preparing K-side action should Black begin play on that wing.

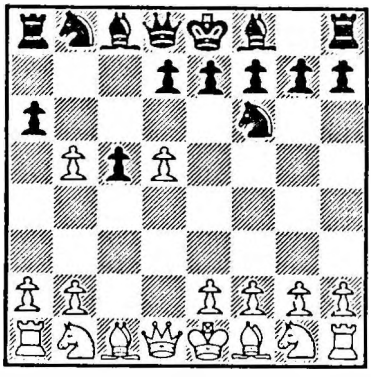
After 5 . . . P–KN3 (indicating the King's Indian plan of P–KB4) White has a promising system in 6 B–Q3 B–N2 7 KN–K2; White can meet 7 . . . O–O with 8 N–N3 and 9 P–KR4!, while if the black king stays in the centre, White can revert to Q-side play with P–QR3 and P–QN4. Note how the blocked centre fully justifies White's wing attacks.

Black has another interesting Full Benoni system with 5 . . . B–K2 instead of 5 . . . P–KN3. This has the effect of slowing down the game even further by not giving White any target to aim at. The same plan, 6 B–Q3 O–O 7 KN–K2 is ineffective now, because Black has 7 . . . N–K1 8 N–N3 B–N4! exchanging his bad bishop. The B–KN4 manoeuvre is one of the points of the system. White therefore usually keeps his knight at KB3 to prevent the bishop emerging. A typical continuation is 6 B–K2 O–O 7 N–B3 QN–Q2 8 O–O N–K1 9 P–QR3 P–KN3 10 B–R6 N–N2 11 Q–Q2 K–R1 (11 . . . P–B4 is strongly met by 12 N–KN5! with an eye on the K6 square) 12 P–QN4 P–N3 13 QR–N1 N–B3, preparing to expel the bishop with N–N5 or N–N1. Black puts his trust in the solidity of the pawn structure while slowly preparing to fight back with P–KB4.

C: The Benko Gambit: 3 . . . P–QN4!? 4 P × P P–QR3

(see diagram overleaf)

This is an extraordinary idea, quite unlike most of the gambits we have encountered before. Here Black is playing a positional



pawn sacrifice as early as the third move. His offer is based on the guarantee of pressure on the open QR- and QN-files and down the long black diagonal. After 5 **P × P P–KN3** 6 **N–QB3 B × P**, White has an immediate decision: whether to leave the black bishop on R3 unopposed and develop his own bishop by means of P–KN3, or whether to play P–K4, allowing his king to be displaced. Some typical lines are as follows:

(a) 7 P–KN3 P–Q3 8 B–N2 B–KN2 9 N–B3 O–O 10 O–O QN–Q2 11 Q–B2 Q–R4 12 R–N1 KR–N1 13 B–Q2 N–N3 14 P–N3 Q–R6 15 B–B1 Q–R4 16 B–Q2 with a draw by repetition.

(b) 7 P–K4 B × B 8 K × B P–Q3 9 N–B3 B–N2 10 P–KR3 O–O 11 K–N1 QN–Q2 12 K–R2 Q–R4 13 R–K1 KR–N1 14 R–K2 R–N5 15 K–N1 N–K1 16 P–R3 R–N2 17 R–B2 QR–N1 18 Q–K2 N–K4 19 N × N B × N 20 B–R6 N–B2 21 QR–QB1 R–N6 22 P–B4 B–Q5 ch 23 K–R2 Q–R3! and Black's powerful initiative grows even more dangerous in the end-game. That is a good example of how difficult White can find a satisfactory resolution of his Q-side problems.

(c) 7 P–K4 B × B 8 K × B P–Q3 9 N–B3 B–N2 10 P–KN3 O–O 11 K–N2 QN–Q2 12 R–K1 Q–N3 13 R–K2 (note that 13 P–K5 P × P 14 N × P N × N 15 R × N Q–N2! 16 Q–B3 KR–Q1 is good for Black) 13 . . . KR–N1 14 P–KR3

Q–R3 15 R–B2 and White prepares Q–K2 and B–Q2 or possibly P–QN3 to free his Q-side.

While the Benko Gambit may not be objectively correct, it is undeniable that Black obtains an easy position to play and active chances. White must certainly work hard and carefully to prove the worth of his extra pawn. In principle, of course, such a gambit must be accepted; it is White's duty to win with his extra pawn. I should just mention, however, that he can also take an easy way out by declining the offer: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–B4 3 P–Q5 P–QN4 and now 4 N–KB3 B–N2! (4 . . . P × P 5 N–B3 followed by P–K4 is good for White) makes it hard for White to develop comfortably; 5 P–QR4 is met simply by 5 . . . P–QR3. Therefore if White wants to force Black to capture on QB4 he must play the immediate 4 P–QR4 P × BP 5 N–QB3. This leads to about equal chances after 5 . . . P–Q3 6 P–K4 P–KN3; White's central advantage is offset by the weaknesses on the QN-file caused by the advance of his RP.

To conclude this section on Indian Defences, here are four games, characteristic wins for White and Black in the Nimzo- and King's Indian Defences. First, the Nimzo-Indians:

WHITE: BOTVINNIK BLACK: CAPABLANCA
(Avro Tournament, 1938)

1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 B–N5 4 P–K3 P–Q4 5 P–QR3

White accepts the doubled pawns in the knowledge that he will be able to liquidate them by exchanging on Q5.

5 . . . B × N ch 6 P × B P–B4 7 P × QP KP × P 8 B–Q3 O–O 9 N–K2 P–QN3 10 O–O B–R3

Correctly offering the exchange of bishops in order to deprive White of his pair.

11 B × B N × B 12 B–N2 Q–Q2 13 P–QR4 KR–K1 14 Q–Q3 P–B5

The beginning of a plan to bring the knight to QN6, but closing the position in this manner encourages White's central expansion by taking the pressure off the QP.

15 **Q–B2 N–N1** 16 **QR–K1 N–B3** 17 **N–N3 N–QR4** 18 **P–B3 N–N6** 19 **P–K4 Q × P**

Both sides have carried out their plans, but now Black must face a powerful attack.

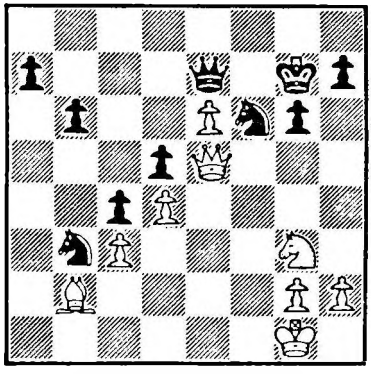
20 **P–K5 N–Q2** 21 **Q–B2 P–N3** 22 **P–B4 P–B4** 23 **P × P e.p.**

White cannot allow the position to remain blocked.

23 . . . **N × BP** 24 **P–B5 R × R** 25 **R × R R–K1** 26 **R–K6! R × R** 27 **P × R K–N2** 28 **Q–B4 Q–K1**

Defending against the threatened 29 N–B5 ch P × N 30 Q–N5 ch.

29 **Q–K5 Q–K2**



30 **B–R3! Q × B** 31 **N–R5 ch! P × N** 32 **Q–N5 ch K–B1** 33 **Q × N ch K–N1** 34 **P–K7**

Black has no perpetual check, so the passed pawn carries the day.

34 . . . **Q–B8 ch** 35 **K–B2 Q–B7 ch** 36 **K–N3 Q–Q6 ch** 37 **K–R4 Q–K5 ch** 38 **K × P Q–K7 ch** 39 **K–R4 Q–K5 ch** 40 **P–N4 Q–K8 ch** 41 **K–R5 Resigns.**

WHITE: SPASSKY BLACK: FISCHER
(Fifth game, World Championship match, 1972)

1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–QB3 B–N5 4 N–B3 P–B4 5 P–K3 N–B3 6 B–Q3 B × N ch

Black makes the exchange without waiting for P–QR3. The reasoning is that with the white knight on KB3, there is less fear of a quick white-pawn advance on the KB- and K-files.

7 P × B P–Q3 8 P–K4 P–K4

Black plays to block the position in order to make the bishops ineffective.

9 P–Q5 N–K2 10 N–R4 P–KR3 11 P–B4 N–N3!

Black cannot afford to open the game with 11 . . . P × P 12 P × P P–KN4 13 P–K5!

12 N × N P × N 13 P × P?

After this move the whole pawn structure congeals very favourably for the black knight. Maintaining the tension with 13 O–O was better.

13 . . . P × P 14 B–K3 P–N3 15 O–O O–O 16 P–QR4 P–QR4!

Fixing the QRP as a weakness. Black's own backward QNP is easily defended.

17 R–N1 B–Q2 18 R–N2 R–N1 19 QR–KB2 Q–K2 20 B–B2 P–KN4!

The beginning of a decisive K-side initiative.

21 B–Q2 Q–K1 22 B–K1 Q–N3 23 Q–Q3 N–R4 24 R × R ch R × R 25 R × R ch K × R 26 B–Q1 N–B5 27 Q–B2?

A blunder in a difficult position allowing an immediate finish.

27 . . . B × P! White resigned

After 28 Q × B Q × P 29 K–B2 N–Q6 ch everything collapses.

Now the two King's Indians. These games illustrate well the attacking potential of both sides in that sharp opening.

WHITE: BOTVINNIK BLACK: TAL
(Twenty-first (and final) game, World Championship match, 1961)

1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–KN3 3 N–QB3 B–N2 4 P–K4 P–Q3 5 P–B3 QN–Q2 6 B–K3 P–K4 7 KN–K2 O–O 8 P–Q5 N–R4 9 Q–Q2

Note that 9 P–KN4 N–B5! 10 N × N P × N 11 B × BP P–KB4! gives Black beautiful play for the pawn; a typical King's Indian offer to enhance the effect of the bishop on KN2.

9 . . . P–KB4 10 **O–O–O P–QR3** 11 **K–N1 QN–B3** 12 **P × P!**

Black threatened to gain a K-side initiative with 12 . . . P × P 13 P × P N–N5, so White acts first.

12 . . . P × P 13 **N–N3 Q–K1** 14 **B–Q3**

The attack on Black's KBP has become unpleasant and demands immediate action.

14 . . . N × N 15 **P × N P–B4** 16 **B–R6 Q–N3** 17 **P–KN4 P–N4**

At last Black starts to play on the Q-side, but White's attack on the other wing is further advanced.

18 **B × B K × B** 19 **R–R4 P × BP** 20 **B–B2 P–R3**

The best chance to defend against the threatened 21 QR–R1 and 22 R–R6.

21 **QR–R1 Q–N4** 22 **Q × Q ch P × Q** 23 **R–R6**

The queen exchange has hardly lessened the force of White's attack.

23 . . . P × P 24 **P × P B × P** 25 **R–N6 ch K–B2** 26 **R–KB1 K–K2** 27 **R–N7 ch K–K1**

27 . . . R–B2 would have lost a piece after 28 R × R ch K × R 29 N–K4, but this is no improvement. 27 . . . K–Q1 was the last chance to resist.

28 N–K4! N–Q2

28 . . . N × N loses to 29 B–R4 ch.

29 N × P ch K–Q1 30 R × R ch N × R 31 N × P B–Q2 32 R–B7 K–B2 33 **P–Q6 ch Resigns**

White is winning at least a rook.

WHITE: BAGIROV BLACK: GUFELD
(Semi-final, USSR Championship, 1973)

1 P–Q4 P–KN3 2 **P–QB4 B–N2** 3 **N–QB3 P–Q3** 4 **P–K4 N–KB3** 5 **P–B3 O–O** 6 **B–K3 N–B3** 7 **KN–K2 R–N1** 8 **Q–Q2 P–QR3** 9 **B–R6 P–QN4** 10 **P–KR4 P–K4!**

Black must strike in the centre before the attack on his king becomes too dangerous.

11 B × B K × B 12 **P–R5 K–R1**

A useful defensive move. 12 . . . N × RP would have been met by 13 P–KN4 with a winning attack.

13 N–Q5 P × BP 14 **RP × P BP × P** 15 **Q–R6**

Single-mindedly pursuing the attack, but 15 N × N Q × N 16 P–Q5 would have been more prudent.

15 . . . N–KR4! 16 **P–KN4 R × NP!** 17 **P × N P–N4!**

Black's idea becomes clear. At the cost of a piece he has halted the white attack and left the enemy king suffering from exposure.

18 R–KN1 P–N5! 19 **O–O–O R × RP** 20 **KN–B4!?**

In such a position the initiative is all that matters. White returns the piece to resuscitate his attack. A good idea, but 20 B–R3! was perhaps a better way to do it.

20 . . . P × N 21 **N × KBP R × N!** 22 **Q × R P–B6**

White has an extra rook, but the threats to his king are not easily met. 23 . . . N–N5 is the immediate danger.

23 B–B4 R–R6 24 **P × P N–N5** 25 **K–N1**

White expects 25 . . . P–B7 ch 26 K–N2 P × R = Q 27

R × Q when White threatens both 28 K × R and 28 R–KB1! and his own attack is back on top. But Black has better:

25 . . . **B–K3!** 26 **B × B N–Q6!**

Two clearance sacrifices to allow Black's queen to join in.

27 **Q–B7**

27 R × N Q–N1 ch leads to a quick mate, but this only prolongs the game a little.

27 . . . **Q–N1 ch** 28 **B–N3 R × B ch** 29 **K–B2 N–N5 ch!** 30 **K × R N–Q4 ch** 31 **K–B2 Q–N7 ch** 32 **K–Q3 Q–N4 ch** and **White resigned;** it is mate after 33 K–B2 Q–K7 ch 34 K–N3 Q–N7 ch 35 K–B4 Q–N4.

CHAPTER 9

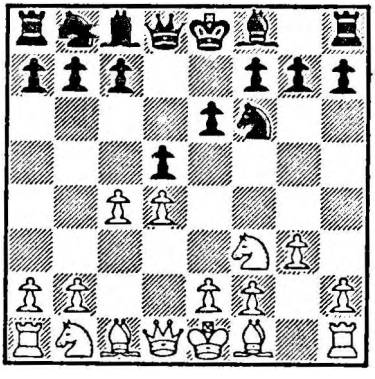
Other Queen's Pawn Openings

In the previous two chapters we have discussed the Queen's Gambit and defences to 1 P–Q4 beginning with 1 . . . N–KB3. We complete the story of 1 P–Q4 openings with the alternatives for both sides. They fall conveniently under three headings: the Catalan, Queen's Pawn Games, and the Dutch Defence.

THE CATALAN OPENING

The Catalan is a Queen's Gambit in which White develops his bishop on KN2. The idea is simple: after Black has been induced to play QP × BP, the long diagonal becomes open for the white-squared bishop whose influence then penetrates deep into the black Q-side.

The position we take as the starting-point for discussion is reached after the moves **1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 N–KB3 N–KB3 4 P–KN3:**



Note that this can also be reached in several different ways; for example 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 P–KN3 P–Q4 4 N–KB3, or 1 N–KB3 P–Q4 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 P–KN3 N–KB3 4 P–Q4, and there are many others. In all cases, of course, Black has numerous possibilities of transposing to other openings, for instance 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K3 3 P–KN3 offers the chance for 3 . . . P–B4 when 4 P–Q5 P × P 5 P × P gives a Benoni, while 4 N–KB3 P × P 5 N × P is an English Opening. Catalan players therefore have to be prepared to play other systems in which an early K-side fianchetto plays a part.

From the diagram position, Black has two main strategic alternatives: either he supports his QP firmly, to restrict the influence of the white bishop on the long diagonal, or he plays for central liquidation with QP × P, aiming to follow with a quick P–QB4.

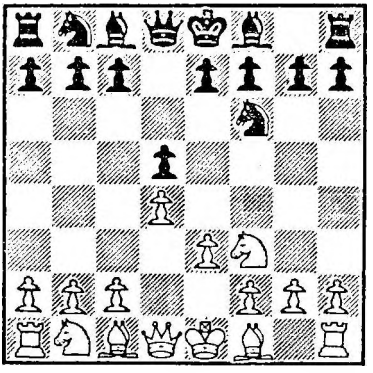
(a) **4 . . . B–K2 5 B–N2 O–O 6 O–O QN–Q2** is very solid for Black. Note that 6 . . . P–B4 would be somewhat risky; after 7 P × QP N × P (or 7 . . . KP × P leading to a Queen's Gambit Tarrasch Defence position) 8 P × P B × P 9 Q–B2 White has a very useful initiative; his more effective development provides immediate opportunities to take advantage of the open lines. 6 . . . P × P 7 Q–B2 leads to positions similar to line (b) below. After 6 . . . QN–Q2, White must endeavour to gain a spatial advantage by playing P–K4. A typical continuation is 7 **Q–B2 P–B3** (7 . . . P–QN3 is strongly met by either 8 N–K5 or 8 P × P when 8 . . . P × P 9 N–K5 is still stronger) 8 **QN–Q2 P–QN3 9 P–K4 B–N2!** (Black must not give ground by exchanging his QP). Now 10 P–K5 N–K1 is not dangerous for Black; the pressure would be off his centre and he is free to continue with R–B1 and P–QB4. Therefore White continues slowly with 10 **P–N3 R–B1 11 B–N2.** Then 11 . . . P–B4 is dangerous for Black after 12 KP × P KP × P 13 P × BP, when the opening of the position favours White's pieces, better placed for attack. Thus play continues in circumspect fashion **11 . . . Q–B2 12 KR–Q1 KR–Q1 13 QR–B1**

Q–N1 with Black still awaiting the right moment to free his game by forcing central exchanges.
(b) **4 . . . P × P 5 Q–R4 ch QN–Q2** (also 5 . . . N–B3 6 B–N2 B–Q2 7 Q × BP R–B1 aiming for N–QR4 and P–B4 is a good equalizing method. 5 . . . Q–Q2 6 Q × BP Q–B3 7 QN–Q2 Q × Q 8 N × Q is unsatisfactory for Black; after 8 . . . P–B4 9 B–N2 P × P 10 N × P the pressure on Black's Q-side and Black's difficulty in developing give White everything he wants in this opening) 6 **B–N2** (6 Q × BP P–QN3 lets Black finish his development easily) 6 **. . . P–QR3.** Now Black threatens to hold his pawn with P–QN4 while also, after White recaptures, this move is useful as part of a Q-side expansion. Nevertheless, Black must still take care to avoid the consequences of premature opening of the position. There can follow 7 Q × BP P–QN4 8 Q–B6 (otherwise 8 . . . B–N2 gives Black a comfortable game) 8 . . . R–QN1 9 B–B4 N–Q4 10 B–N5 B–K2 11 B × B Q × B 12 O–O B–N2 13 Q–B2 P–QB4 and Black has equalized.

QUEEN'S PAWN GAMES

After 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 or 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 we have considered so far only lines in which White tries to increase his control of space with 2 P–QB4. Other lines tend to have a lower strategic content and rely on quick development for middle-game chances. While Black must play accurately to avoid falling victim to a sudden attack in many of these lines, his prospects of complete equality from the opening are, in general, better than in the lines where White has used his extra move to claim space with P–QB4.

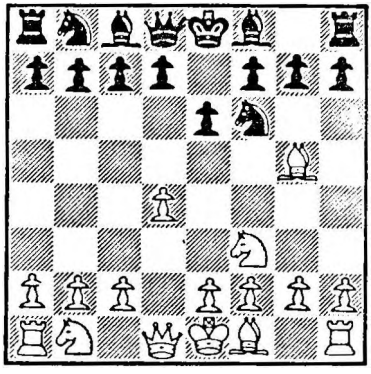
A: The Colle System: 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 P–K3



White's plan is to force P–K4 by means of B–Q3, QN–Q2 and, if necessary, Q–K2. An example of the efficacy of this idea against passive play is the game Colle–O'Hanlon, Nice, 1930, which continued 3 . . . P–B4 4 P–B3 P–K3 5 B–Q3 B–Q3 6 QN–Q2 QN–Q2 7 O–O O–O 8 R–K1 R–K1? 9 P–K4 P × KP 10 N × P N × N 11 B × N P × P? 12 B × P ch! K × B 13 N–N5 ch K–N3 (or 13 . . . K–N1 14 Q–R5 N–B3 15 Q × P ch K–R1 16 R–K4! winning) 14 P–KR4! R–R1 15 R × P ch! N–B3 (15 . . . P × R 16 P–R5 ch! R × P 17 Q–Q3 ch K–B3 18 Q–B3 ch also leads to mate) 16 P–R5 ch K–R3 17 R × B Q–R4 18 N × P ch K–R2 19 N–N5 ch K–N1 20 Q–N3 ch Resigns.

Black has two simple ways to avoid any difficulties in this opening. First, by playing 3 . . . P–B4 4 P–B3 QN–Q2 5 B–Q3 P–KN3 6 QN–Q2 B–N2 Black avoids any possibility of a White attack and secures equal chances with no difficulty. Even simpler is to seize control of White's K4 square with 3 . . . B–B4 when 4 P–B4 P–B3 leaves Black in a good line of the Slav Defence, while 4 B–Q3 P–K3! also solves all Black's normal development problems.

B: The Torre Attack: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 N–KB3 P–K3 3 B–N5



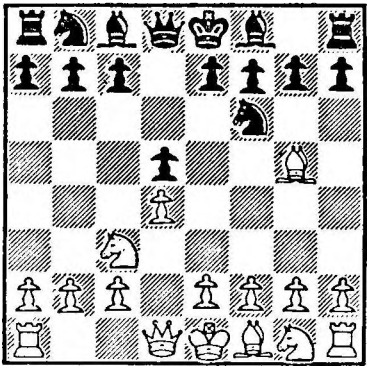
White's intention here is again to omit P–QB4 and continue with quick piece development, but here he first develops the bishop outside the pawn chain before playing P–K3. There is also a version of the Torre Attack with 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 B–N5, but in that case Black has the additional possibility of 3 . . . N–K5! 4 B–B4 P–QB4 with immediate activity. As in the Colle System, the Torre Attack aims for a K-side attack. Here the plan is based on control and occupation of the K5 square as the base for White's aggressive intentions. After, for example, 3 . . . P–B4 4 P–K3 B–K2 (4 . . . Q–N3!? is sharper) 5 QN–Q2 P–Q4 6 P–B3 QN–Q2 7 B–Q3 O–O 8 N–K5! N × N 9 P × N N–Q2 10 B–KB4, White has the makings of a promising attack; 10 . . . P–B3 is met by 11 Q–R5 P–KN3 12 B × P P × B 13 Q × P ch K–R1 14 P–KR4 with a winning attack, and 10 . . . P–B4 is answered by 11 P–KR4 (preventing P–KN4) followed by P–KN4 opening lines with great effect.

Black therefore does best to delay castling, making White's attacking task more difficult. For example 3 . . . P–Q4 4 QN–Q2 B–K2 5 P–K3 QN–Q2 6 B–Q3 P–B4 7 P–B3 P–QN3! 8 O–O B–N2 gives a perfectly good game for Black since

9 N–K5 can be met by 9 . . . N × N 10 P × N N–Q2 11 B–KB4 P–KN4! 12 B–N3 P–KR4. Black can always castle long and his attack on the K-side is well under way.

Similar in intention to the Torre Attack is the London System 1 P–Q4 P–Q4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 B–B4. In that case, Black does best to take immediate advantage of the bishop's absence from the white Q-side. After 3 . . . P–B4 4 P–K3 N–B3 5 P–B3 Q–N3 6 Q–B1 B–B4 Black has an easy development and no real problems.

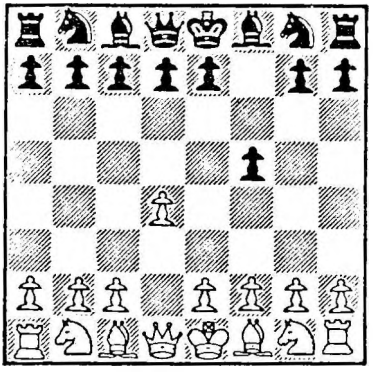
C: The Veresov System: 1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 N–QB3 P–Q4 3 B–N5



This left-handed Ruy Lopez introduces the possibility of doubling the black pawns with B × N. Black's sharpest continuation is 3 . . . P–B4 4 B × N NP × B 5 P–K4 P × KP 6 P × P Q–R4 leading to a wild position after 7 Q–R5. More sedate is 3 . . . QN–Q2, putting a stop to White's B × N threat and allowing Black to complete his development in peace. After 4 N–B3 Black can choose between 4 . . . P–KR3 5 B–R4 P–K3 or 4 . . . P–KN3 5 P–K3 B–N2. In either case his position is perfectly satisfactory.

THE DUTCH DEFENCE

Finally we come to Black's last serious defence to 1 P–Q4 not yet mentioned in this book. Apart from 1 . . . P–Q4 and 1 . . . N–KB3 there is just one further move which contests White's K4 square: 1 . . . **P–KB4,** the Dutch Defence.



By advancing his KBP, Black already announces his intention to play for a K-side attack in the middle game. His weakened king position, however, gives grounds to suspect the safety of the whole idea.

2 **P–KN3**

Black's first move already gives him problems in developing his QB. The most natural place for it would seem to be on the long diagonal. For that reason White finds the move 2 P–KN3 attractive. His own bishop will take the diagonal first. The other attraction of the move lies in the great safety of the castled king behind fianchettoed bishop. Since Black aims to attack on the K-side, White should ensure that his king will be as safe as possible there.

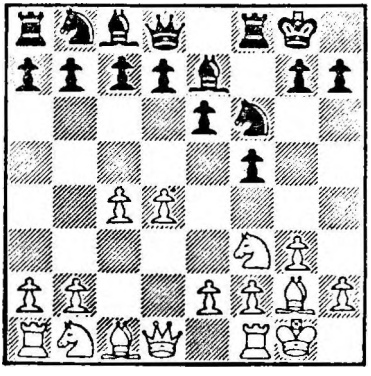
Of course many other moves are possible. We should mention particularly the Staunton Gambit 2 P–K4!? P × P 3 N–QB3 N–KB3 and now 4 B–KN5, best met by 4 . . . P–B3, but not 4 . . . P–Q4? 5 B × N and 6 Q–R5 ch regaining

the pawn; or 4 P–B3, turning it into a real gambit; or the wild 4 P–KN4. White certainly has attacking chances in these lines, but since the main-line Dutch offers good prospects, there seems little reason to gamble a pawn.

2 . . . N–KB3
3 B–N2 P–K3

Black can also try a curious hybrid, half Dutch, half King's Indian: 3 . . . P–KN3. Black plans B–N2, O–O, P–Q3 and an eventual P–K4, leading to a King's Indian position in which he has already achieved the thematic P–KB4 advance. Naturally White counters this scheme: after 4 P–QB4 B–N2 5 N–QB3 O–O 6 N–B3 (6 N–R3 is another good way to develop; the knight can be strong on KB4) 6 . . . P–Q3 7 O–O N–B3 8 P–Q5! N–QR4 9 Q–Q3 the weakness on Black's K3 gives him difficulties. 9 . . . P–K4 10 P × P e.p. B × P 11 P–N3 leaves White with a clear advantage with his better-coordinated pieces. Note also that if Black plays 7 . . . P–K3 in this line instead of 7 . . . N–B3, in order to meet 8 P–Q5 with 8 . . . P–K4, White simply plays for P–K4 himself: 8 Q–B2 N–B3 9 R–Q1 Q–K2 10 P–K4 and White stands better.

4 N–KB3 B–K2
5 O–O O–O
6 P–B4



This is the normal position of the Dutch Defence, and Black must decide what pawn formation he wants to adopt. There are two main possibilities: the Stonewall Variation with 6 . . . P–Q4, or the more fluid 6 . . . P–Q3.

After 6 . . . P–Q4, White's bishop on KN2 bites on granite; Black's own bishop on QB1 looks terrible, but may be developed either on QN2 or QR3, or shunted via Q2 and K1 to a K-side post. The real problem in Black's position is the black-square weakness, and in particular the K4 square. Given time Black could develop attacking chances with P–B3, N–K5, QN–Q2, QN–B3, Q–K1, Q–R4 and P–KN4. Unfortunately, White has ample chance of developing central activity. A typical continuation is 7 QN–Q2 P–B3 8 Q–B2 Q–K1 9 N–K5 QN–Q2 10 N–Q3! N–K5 11 N–B3 P–KN4 12 P–QN4 Q–R4 13 R–N1 R–B3 14 P–N5 P–B5 15 KNP × P P–N5 16 N(B3)–K5 R–R3 17 P–KR3 P × P 18 B–B3 P–R7 ch 19 K–R1 Q–R6 20 B–K3 and the Black attack gets nowhere. In general White's central control should, with sufficient circumspection, be enough to beat off such a wing attack, so Black really ought to play more calmly with development of his Q-side pieces rather than such a crude attacking plan.

The alternative, 6 . . . P–Q3, leaves White with a choice between two plans: playing for P–K4, or maintaining the pawn structure in its present form:

(a) 7 N–QB3 Q–K1 8 R–K1 is the most straightforward way to plan the advance of the KP. After 8 . . . Q–N3 9 P–K4! is still possible since 9 . . . P × P 10 N × P N × N 11 R × N Black cannot play 11 . . . Q × R owing to 12 N–R4! winning the queen. Also insufficient is 11 . . . P–K4, hoping for 12 P × P? Q × R!, but well answered by 12 R–K3 and Black must give ground in the centre. The best move is 11 . . . N–B3, when 12 Q–K2 maintains some pressure for White. Nevertheless, Black can fight back with 12 . . . B–B3 13 B–Q2 P–K4 14 P × P N × P and his pieces become active.

(b) 7 N–QB3 Q–K1 8 P–N3 is a non-committal plan; after 8 . . . Q–R4 White plays 9 B–QR3! threatening 10 P–Q5

P–K4 11 N × P! The pin on the black QP is very discomforting in such a position and adds great force to White's play. Black should therefore leave his queen on K1 to maintain protection of the bishop. After 8 . . . P–QR4! 9 B–N2 (9 B–QR3 is now met by 9 . . . N–R3 followed by N–QN5) 9 . . . N–R3 (9 . . . Q–R4 10 P–K3! favours White; after 10 . . . B–Q2 11 N–K1 the exchange of queens leads to an end-game where Black's irregular pawns are a distinct liability) 10 P–K3 and White has a position without weakness; he can still play Q–K2 and P–K4, or prepare a slow advance of the Q-side pawns. Such a sound yet flexible formation makes it difficult for Black to carry out his aggressive intentions.

For the sake of completeness, there is just one more defence to 1 P–Q4 to add: the rather disreputable Budapest Defence, **1 P–Q4 N–KB3 2 P–QB4 P–K4?!** Such a pawn offer can hardly be correct, though it is not quite as bad as at first seems to be the case. After 3 **P** × **P**, Black has two possibilities:
(a) 3 **. . . N–K5** is trappy but incorrect. After 4 N–KB3 N–QB3 5 P–QR3 White simply avoids all trouble and keeps his extra pawn. The usefulness of the move of the QRP is seen in such a variation as 5 B–B4? B–B4 6 P–K3 B–N5 ch 7 QN–Q2 P–KN4 8 B–N3 P–KR4 when Black has a big advantage.
(b) 3 **. . . N–N5** aims to regain the pawn, but leaves Black with insufficient central control. For example 4 N–KB3 B–B4 5 P–K3 N–QB3 6 B–K2 KN × KP(5) 7 O–O O–O 8 N × N N × N 9 N–B3 P–Q3 10 N–R4 B–N3 11 P–QN3 with a permanent nagging advantage for White.

We end this chapter with an example of a surprising Catalan attack.

WHITE: BRONSTEIN BLACK: KEENE
(Alexander Memorial Tournament, 1975)

1 P–QB4 N–KB3 2 P–Q4 P–K3 3 P–KN3 P–Q4 4 B–N2 QN–Q2 5 N–Q2 B–K2 6 KN–B3 O–O 7 O–O P–QN3

8 **P–N3 B–N2** 9 **B–N2 P–B4** 10 **P–K3 R–B1** 11 **R–B1 R–B2** 12 **Q–K2 Q–R1** 13 **KR–K1 KR–B1**

Very patiently played by both so far, but Black has missed the very deep pawn sacrifice prepared by his opponent.

14 **P × QP B × P** 15 **P–K4 B–N2** 16 **P–Q5!**

This is the only way to keep the initiative; for his pawn White gains open lines for attack.

16 . . . **P × P** 17 **P × P B–B1?**

17 . . . R–K1 was the right way to defend, though it was difficult to appreciate the force of the attack which now follows.

18 **N–K4 N × N** 19 **Q × N B × P** 20 **Q–B5! P–N3**

Black cannot avoid weaknesses in the face of the threatened 21 N–N5. One amusing line is 20 . . . P–KR3 21 N–N5! P–N3 22 B × B P × Q 23 B × P mate.

21 **Q–B4 P–B3** 22 **QR–Q1 P–B5** 23 **N–N5!**

Very neat; 23 . . . P × N loses to 24 Q–Q4, and 23 . . . B × B to 24 R × N! R × R 25 Q × P B–KN2 26 Q–K6 ch.

23 . . . **R–B4** 24 **R × B R × R** 25 **P × P P × N** 26 **Q–N4 R–KB4** 27 **B × Q R × B** 28 **Q–K4**

Black's surrendering his queen does not long postpone the end.

28 . . . **R–Q1** 29 **Q–Q4 K–B2** 30 **P–N4! Resigns.**

CHAPTER 10

The English and Other Flank Openings

In this final chapter we discuss those opening systems which do not begin with 1 P–K4 or 1 P–Q4. These combine two separate tendencies: the first is a slow and methodical plan to control the centre, not by immediate direct occupation, but by influence of pieces and pawns from a distance; the second theme is a challenge to Black to play as though he were White. Indeed many of the flank openings are in effect Black defence systems played with an extra move. As we shall see, that extra move can make a great deal of difference.

THE ENGLISH OPENING: 1 P–QB4

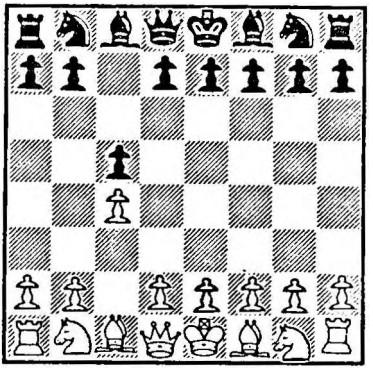
This is often used as a transpositional possibility, with White playing P–Q4 on his second move, or a little later, to reach other Queen's Pawn openings after Black has shown his hand. Some Queen's Pawn players, in fact, simply dislike meeting the Queen's Gambit Accepted, so play 1 P–QB4 just to prevent that being adopted. There are, however, two important independent English Opening lines, arising when Black refuses to allow White to make up for his omission by playing 2 P–Q4. These are the variations introduced by the moves 1 . . . P–QB4 and 1 . . . P–K4.

The Symmetrical English: 1 P–QB4 P–QB4

(see diagram overleaf)

This has a reputation as a drawish variation, partly because of some very dull lines which frequently lead to quick draws.

White can, however, attempt to turn his extra move to advantage by playing P–Q4 at an opportune moment in order to secure greater central control.



2 N–KB3

2 N–QB3 P–KN3 3 P–KN3 (or 3 N–B3 B–N2 4 P–Q4 P × P 5 N × P N–QB3 and White has no time for P–K4 and B–K3) 3 . . . B–N2 4 B–N2 N–QB3 is one of those symmetric lines which often end in draws. The natural development plan for both sides is to play P–K3, KN–K2 and P–Q4 to gain central space. So there follows 5 P–K3 P–K3 6 KN–K2 KN–K2 7 O–O O–O 8 P–Q4 P × P 9 N × P P–Q4 10 P × P N × N 11 P × N N × P 12 N × N P × N with a very level position. Naturally, both sides can diverge from this sequence, but generally speaking 2 N–KB3 is a more flexible move than bringing out the other knight first.

2 . . . N–KB3

Here 2 . . . P–KN3 is met by 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P B–N2 5 P–K4 with a Maroczy Bind Sicilian Defence position.

3 P–KN3

This is the normal way to develop the bishop in the English Opening. White's whole strategy is based on white-square control and pressure on the long diagonal.

3 . . . P–QN3

Black adopts a sort of Queen's Indian Defence, in order to neutralize the white bishop on KN2.

4 B–N2 B–N2
5 N–B3 P–K3

Black can also play 5 . . . P–KN3, continuing in more symmetrical fashion.

6 O–O B–K2
7 P–Q4 P × P
8 Q × P

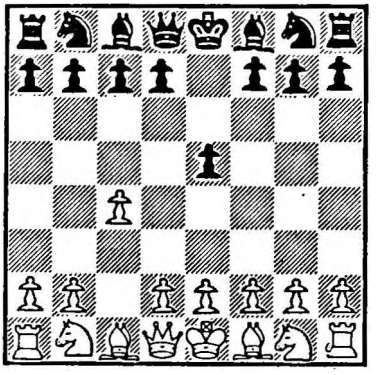
This is more promising than 8 N × P B × B 9 K × B. White has gained some space by playing 7 P–Q4, so he should keep pieces on the board in the hope of cramping the opponent. After 8 Q × P White has achieved the type of position for which he aims in the symmetrical English. He has more space and chances of reaching a potentially favourable Sicilian position after P–K4. Black, on the other hand, has a solid position with possibilities of eventual counterplay by means of P–Q4 or P–QN4. There can follow 8 . . . P–Q3 9 P–N3 O–O 10 P–K4 P–QR3 11 B–N2 QN–Q2 12 Q–K3 Q–B2 13 N–Q4 KR–K1 and it is not so easy for White to formulate an effective plan to utilize his advantage in space.

Note how White, in this opening sequence, delayed moving his QP until his development was quite well advanced. After, for example, 1 P–QB4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 P–Q4 P × P 4 N × P White has lured Black's only advanced central pawn away, but gives him greater opportunity to develop immediate counterplay. After 4 . . . P–K3 5 N–QB3 B–N5 or 5 B–N2 P–Q4 White finds that his control of the centre is not as great as he would like it to be.

The Sicilian Reversed: 1 P–QB4 P–K4

This is Black's most radical reply to the English Opening. White now finds himself playing a Sicilian with a move in

hand. That, of course, is very useful in the sharper variations, but we find that if Black plays in a manner corresponding to White's less ambitious anti-Sicilian systems, he can achieve a sound position without great difficulty.



2 N–QB3 N–KB3

Also possible is 2 . . . N–QB3 3 P–KN3 P–KN3 4 B–N2 B–N2 with a reversed Closed Sicilian. As in that opening, White must now play for the advance of his QNP, while Black seeks play on the K-side.

3 N–B3 N–B3

4 P–KN3 B–N5

4 . . . P–Q4 5 P × P N × P 6 B–N2 is very dangerous for Black; after 6 . . . B–K3 7 O–O B–K2 White can strike effectively with 8 P–Q4, while after 6 . . . N–N3 either 7 O–O B–K2 8 P–QR4 or 7 P–QR3 followed by P–QN4 would initiate quick Q-side play for White.

5 B–N2 O–O

6 O–O P–K5

7 N–K1 B × N

8 QP × B P–KR3

Black prevents the pin on his knight and secures an equal position. He will complete his development with R–K1 and P–Q3 and has little to fear from the white bishop pair.

Before leaving the English Opening, we should look at what happens to other Black replies on the first move, if he tries to transpose to certain other openings:

(a) 1 P–QB4 N–KB3 2 N–QB3 P–K3 invites a Nimzo-Indian after 3 P–Q4 B–N5, but can lead to a strange pseudo-Nimzo after 3 P–KN3 B–N5, while also running into complications after 3 P–K4 P–B4 4 P–K5 N–N1.
(b) 1 P–QB4 N–KB3 2 N–QB3 P–Q4 3 P × P N × P is a cousin of the Grünfeld, but one in which White has increased flexibility by not having moved his QP. After 4 P–KN3 P–KN3 5 B–N2 N × N 6 NP × N, White can delay the advance of his centre pawns until later, making it more difficult for Black to gain his usual counterplay.
(c) 1 P–QB4 N–KB3 2 N–QB3 P–KN3 is perfectly satisfactory if Black is happy in a King's Indian Defence. Note that White can avoid a Grünfeld by playing 3 P–K4 B–N2 4 P–Q4. Some English players use this move order specifically to avoid Grünfelds.
(d) 1 P–QB4 P–K3 is a safe way to reach a Queen's Gambit or Catalan position after 2 N–QB3 P–Q4 or 2 P–KN3 P–Q4. In general, White gains little by avoiding P–Q4, though he may, in Catalan-type positions, play P–Q3 and try to attack the centre further with P–K4.

RÉTI'S OPENING AND RELATED SYSTEMS: 1 N–KB3

By playing 1 N–KB3, White gives away very little of his plans. He can reach Q-pawn openings if Black allows 2 P–Q4, or lines of the English after 2 P–QB4. White can also defer the decision of what pawn formation to adopt in the centre, continuing with 2 P–KN3, 3 B–N2 and 4 O–O, keeping options open. We shall see some of the possible transpositional possibilities in the notes below.

1 . . . N–KB3

After 1 . . . P–Q4 White can, of course, steer towards a Queen's Gambit with 2 P–Q4, but he also has the possibility of the immediate 2 P–QB4. This is known as Réti's Opening after the Czechoslovak grandmaster who popularized it in the 1920s. Black can reply 2 . . . P × P, on the lines of the Queen's Gambit Accepted, 2 . . . P–QB3 or 2 . . . P–K3, as in the Slav and Queen's Gambit Declined, or 2 . . . P–Q5, giving a Benoni Reversed. Note that in the latter case White can continue with 3 P–QN4!? preventing support of the black pawn with . . . P–QB4.

1 . . . P–QB4 could lead to an English Opening after 2 P–QB4 or even a Sicilian Defence after 2 P–K4.

2 P–KN3 P–Q4

If Black continues copying with 2 . . . P–KN3 3 B–N2 B–N2, he is most likely to find himself in a King's Indian or Grünfeld Defence after 4 P–B4 O–O 5 P–Q4. Maintaining symmetry with 4 P–B4 P–B4 5 O–O O–O 6 N–B3 N–B3 gives White the opportunity to break in the centre with 7 P–Q4 P × P 8 N × P, with a strong hold on Q5 and a permanent advantage in space.

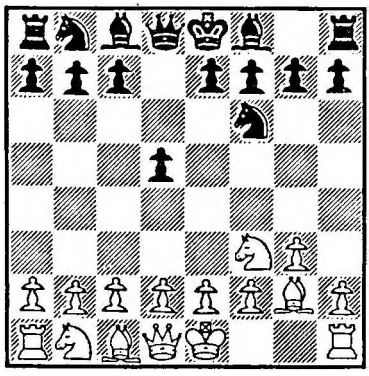
Black can, however, himself remain flexible with 2 . . . P–QN3 3 B–N2 B–N2, which is most likely to lead to an English Opening after 4 P–B4 P–B4, or possibly to a Queen's Indian if Black chooses not to advance the QBP.

3 B–N2

Now Black has several possibilities. White has still not committed his centre pawns, so both sides must still be alert to transpositional finesses. (See diagram opposite.)

Let us look at some of the possibilities:

(a) 3 . . . P–QB4 4 O–O N–B3 gives White the choice between 5 P–Q4 and 5 P–Q3. After 5 P–Q4 Black finds reversed Grünfeld positions rather uncomfortable if the centre is opened; the extra move becomes very important. Also after 5 . . . P–K3 6 P–B4 White reaches a pleasant form of Catalan.



His bishop on KN2 can look forward to increased scope on the long diagonal after the centre has been liquidated. The alternative, 5 P–Q3, leads to a slower game, with White adopting the strategy of the King's Indian Defence with colours reversed. Again the extra tempo can make life difficult for Black if he tries to follow normal lines.

(b) 3 . . . P–K3 takes a solid stand in the centre. Now White can adopt a King's Indian Attack with greater ambition: 4 P–Q3 B–K2 5 QN–Q2 P–QB4 6 P–K4 N–B3 7 O–O O–O 8 P–K5 and the advanced KP gives the basis for a K-side attack. White usually tries to advance his KRP, even as far as the sixth rank, and support the attack with the manoeuvre N–KB1, N–R2 and N–N4. Black, in the meantime, must seek counterplay by advancing his Q-side pawns. Note, however, that after 3 . . . P–K3 4 P–Q3, Black can take immediate notice of White's intentions by playing 4 . . . P–QN3. In that case White's plans are not so easily executed since 5 O–O B–N2 6 QN–Q2 QN–Q2 7 P–K4 P × P 8 N–N5 N–B4! is not what White desires.

(c) 3 . . . B–N5 or 3 . . . B–B4 are two important independent lines. Black will support his QP solidly with P–K3 and P–QB3 with his bishop developed outside the chain. White again has the possibilities of playing for either P–QB4 or P–K4. Black may have to concede the bishop pair by exchanging his

Q-bishop, but his position remains very solid. A typical continuation is 3 . . . B–B4 4 P–B4 P–B3 5 P–N3 P–K3 6 B–N2 B–K2 7 O–O O–O 8 P–Q3 P–KR3 9 QN–Q2 QN–Q2 and both sides have completed their development satisfactorily. White must try for eventual Q-side play, in the hope that the black bishop on KB4 will play no useful role.

(d) 3 . . . P–KN3 is still a safe alternative, if Black is willing to reach Grünfeld types of position after P–QB4. Here, too, White can play a reversed King's Indian with P–Q3 and P–K4.

OTHER OPENINGS

Besides the four 'respectable' openings, 1 P–K4, 1 P–Q4, 1 P–QB4 and 1 N–KB3, practically every other legal move for White has been tried in serious competition. White's advantage at the start of the game is such that he may dare such adventures that would just be foolhardy with the black pieces. Against arcane openings, Black is always best advised simply to revert to the sound principles of opening play: control of the centre and mobilization of forces. There are, however, just a couple of these less usual White first moves which deserve a mention:

A: Bird's Opening: 1 P–KB4

White announces his intention to play a reversed Dutch Defence. Black can safely concur with 1 . . . P–Q4 2 N–KB3 P–KN3, but can also play more flexibly with the immediate 1 . . . P–KN3, waiting to see how White develops before deciding whether the QP belongs on Q3 or Q4. White can, of course, in this case remedy his first move by playing 2 P–K4 with a strange sort of closed Sicilian after 2 . . . P–QB4.

B: Larsen's Opening: 1 P–QN3

This is a good example of how White's extra move allows him certain liberties. After 1 . . . P–K4 2 B–N2 N–QB3 3 P–K3 P–Q4 4 B–N5 White already has developed serious pressure against the centre. Instead, Black is perhaps better advised to adopt a more conservative central structure with pawns at Q4 and K3, or K4 and Q3.

To conclude, a fine positional win to illustrate that life may not be as easy as it seems for Black in the Symmetrical English Opening.

WHITE: SMYSLOV BLACK: BENKO
(Monaco, 1969)

1 P–QB4 P–QB4 2 N–KB3 N–KB3 3 P–KN3 P–KN3 4 P–N3 B–N2 5 B–QN2 P–N3 6 B–N2 B–N2 7 O–O O–O 8 N–B3 P–Q4?!

The beginning of Black's problems. The simplification which follows is to White's advantage.

9 N × P N × N 10 B × B K × B 11 P × N Q × P 12 P–Q4! P × P 13 Q × P ch Q × Q 14 N × Q B × B 15 K × B

White has reached the ending for which he was playing. At first sight the position may look almost equal, but on closer inspection, White has a clear advantage. His knight on Q4 makes it difficult for Black to develop satisfactorily, with possibilities of N–N5 or N–B6 ever present to molest the Q-side pawns.

15 . . . R–B1 16 QR–B1 N–Q2 17 KR–Q1 N–B4 18 P–QN4! N–R5 19 N–N5 R × R

19 . . . P–QR3 would have lost a pawn to 20 N–B7 (20 . . . R–R2? 21 N–K6 ch), but now White gains the QB-file.

20 R × R P–QR4 21 P–QR3 R–Q1 22 R–B7 R–Q4 23 N–R7 P × P 24 P × P P–K3 25 N–B6

White's active pieces exert great pressure. The immediate threat

is 26 P–K4 followed by N–K5 or N–Q8, while White also has the possibility of P–B4 followed by N–K5. Black can hardly avoid the loss of his KBP.

25 ... **R–Q7** 26 **N–K5 R × P** 27 **N × BP P–R4** 28 **N–N5 ch K–B3** 29 **K–B1!**

If the Black rook moves, his king finds itself in a mating net after 30 P–B4. Now he loses the exchange and all is over.

29 ... **R × P ch** 30 **K × R R × N** 31 **K–K3 K–N5** 32 **P–N5 K–R6** 33 **R–B4 N–N7** 34 **R–B2 Resigns.**

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Translated by Harry Golombek

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